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# The Nation.

July 6/13, 1985 \$1.25; U.K. 65p

## EDITORIAL

### DESPERATELY SEEKING SOLUTIONS

The loud noise you hear whenever an airplane is hijacked or an embassy attacked is the creak and clang of barn doors swinging shut after the horses have left. The pundits and politicians call for sanctions, censorship and regional compacts to prevent or at least discourage future acts of terrorism, but nothing ever happens and the world waits for the next bomb to go off. The desperately sought response to terrorism is invariably elusive.

The reason seems obvious. Terrorism is not a virus or a symptom that can be isolated and treated. Rather, it is an aspect of the condition of international anarchy, in which victims participate along with villains. Modern terrorism occurs alongside and in reaction to the activities of sovereign states. No global government is empowered to resolve national disputes or restrain the terrible uses of state power—to check the adventures of South Africa, or Libya, or the United States in Central America, to offer only three examples of many that can be found. Nor is there an accepted code of conduct that distinguishes between acts of state-supported terrorism and the crimes of movements and militias directed against national armies.

The United Nations has so far been ineffectual against terrorism because it has no overarching power to check the acts of sovereign nations. Its many critics, especially in the West, argue that the organization is useless as a mechanism for preventing international violence because it politicizes every issue it considers. But that could so be the best argument for another try. Terrorism, after all, is the politics of anarchy in its most violent form, and the proper response must eventually be found in the politics of peace.

#### 'OUR' SOCIAL DEMOCRATS

Christopher  
Hitchens

#### HARASSING VISITORS TO NICARAGUA

Frank Donner

#### A FARMERS' BILL

Devorah  
Lanner

#### CRITICISM NOVELS

Terrence  
Rafferty

#### GAY HISTORY ON FILM

George  
De Stefano

WITHDRAWN

## BEAT THE DEVIL

### THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ALI AGCA

ALEXANDER COCKBURN

At precisely the moment the United States is lashing itself into a state of incoherent paranoia about the ambit and menace of terrorism, one of the prime exhibits in the pantheon of "terrorism" is collapsing before the eyes of the world's press assembled in Rome.

From the moment, in September of 1982, that a Bulgarian connection in the bid to kill the Pope was first proposed to a wide American audience by Claire Sterling in *Reader's Digest* and by Marvin Kalb on NBC, the presumed K.G.B.-backed plot has been taken as the weightiest evidence for the existence of a Terror International sourced in Moscow. Agca's "confession" was of immeasurable help to the Reagan Administration in its denunciations of the Evil Empire.

But ever since the most keenly anticipated show trial of our time began in Rome on May 27, what has been emerging in outline is the story not of a K.G.B.-inspired plot but of a right-wing conspiracy to bring off a major propaganda coup in the cold war, throw some more dung on the already putrefying corpse of détente and, specifically, discredit the left in Italy. If the witting executors of this conspiracy are found in official and paragonovernmental organizations in Rome and Washington, the unwitting—to put it most charitably—agents are located in the offices of *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, NBC, PBS and *Reader's Digest*. It will be instructive to see how all these outfits deal with the proceedings in Judge Severino Santapichi's courtroom in the next few weeks, now that Agca has only to open his mouth for everyone there to start laughing.

(Continued on Page 6)

# LETTERS.

## MUDSLINGERS AND MUCKRAKERS

Havertown, Pa.

Alexander Cockburn and Francis Wilkinson are very apt disciples of Senator Joseph McCarthy, even though they are on the other side of the political fence. Their use of guilt by association in attacking Michael Novak would have made the Senator proud, particularly since much of their mudslinging was off target ["Beat the Devil," May 18].

When Novak took over as editor of *Slovakia* in 1976, he asked me to help him turn it into a respected scholarly journal that would publish interdisciplinary articles on Slovak history and culture from a variety of perspectives. As a result, we have published scholarly articles on such topics as the Slovak state by Stanislav Kirschbaum, a Slovak nationalist supporter of the state, and by Yeshayahu Jelinek, a Slovak Jew and opponent of it. Similarly, we have published short stories by left-leaning American writers such as Paul Wilkes, as well as essays by the Marxists Frantisek Hecko and Alvena Seckar. Thus, we have presented a broad range of views, as is fitting in a democratically oriented journal.

Not only did Cockburn and Wilkinson distort Novak's role as editor of *Slovakia* but they also got their facts wrong. There is no Czechoslovak nation, as they claimed. If they had bothered to check the 1969 Constitution of Czechoslovakia, they would have discovered that it is a federal republic composed of the "Czech and Slovak Nations." Furthermore, Bohemia was not "traditionally Protestant." It was 98 percent Roman Catholic, although the majority of Czechs were not churchgoers. The Slovak Republic was not established in July of 1939, as Cockburn and Wilkinson reported, but on March 14, 1939. And finally, the regime of Father Jozef Tiso was labeled "clerical-fascist" by post-World War II Marxist historians who tried to justify the 1948 Communist takeover of Czechoslovakia by defaming the whole Czechoslovak past, not just the war years. Cockburn and Wilkinson may accept this Marxist nomenclature; the editors of *Slovakia* do not.

I hate to get into an argument about the number of Jews killed during the period of the Slovak state because Novak and I, and most Slovaks, deplore the fact that any were killed. We recognize that the deportation and extermination of 53,000 Slovak Jews (not 75,000, as reported in *The Nation*) is a terrible blot on the history of the Slovak nation. On the other hand, how many of Slovakia's 89,000 Jews would have survived had there been no Slovak state and had the Germans simply occupied Slovakia, as they did Bohemia and Moravia? Virtually no Jews survived in Bohemia and Moravia.

Finally, your linking of Novak with Stanislav Kirschbaum and the latter with his

father, Jozef, is the lowest form of guilt by association that I have ever seen. Jozef Kirschbaum, whom you try to depict as a great villain, was actually anti-German and was dispatched as a chargé d'affaires to Switzerland shortly after the Slovak state was created because the Germans regarded him as an enemy! In 1945, his son was only 3 years old.

I repeat: Senator Joe McCarthy would have been proud.

M. Mark Stolarik  
Editor, Slovakia

## COCKBURN REPLIES

New York City

It seems to be part of the mandate of *Slovakia* that its editors be apologists for the regime of Father Jozef Tiso in the wartime Slovak Republic. Its longest-serving editor, Dr. Jozef Pauco (1964-75), was one of the most rabid persecutors of the Slovak underground after the uprising of 1944, before finding sanctuary in the United States after the war. His successor as editor, Michael Novak, praised Pauco as "having served the aspirations of the Slovak people long and well," and then published Stanislav Kirschbaum's whitewash of Tiso that I have already dealt with at length in *The Nation* ["Beat the Devil," May 18; "Letters," June 22]. Now Stolarik tries to claim that Tiso's regime was not clerical-fascist and that Jozef Kirschbaum was sorely wronged. So let me repeat: both Kirschbaums and Novak have been associated with apologetics for Tiso's regime and are thus guilty of mutilating history. There is nothing McCarthyite in pointing that out.

The labeling of Tiso's regime as clerical-fascist is not a monopoly held by Marxists. Yeshayahu Jelinek, invoked by Novak and Stolarik (though Jelinek's book was criticized in *Slovakia* for giving "a disappointing and unsystematic account of the Jewish question"), uses the term, to take one example. It is indeed an appropriate one. The Hlinka Party was founded to represent the interests of the Catholic clergy; Tiso was a priest, and the one-party state he presided over was deeply solicitous of the Catholic Church. The role of the church made the regime clerical-fascist rather than straightforwardly Nazi, even though Tiso—in imitation of Hitler—introduced the Führer principle in 1942. He had earlier presided over the aryanization of Slovak state and society, by which Jews were deprived of their constitutional and economic rights, expelled from public life and subjected to forced labor prior to extermination. Clerical-fascist is thus an entirely accurate description.

The most ludicrous part of Stolarik's letter is his insinuation that the Jews in the Slovak Republic were somehow better off than those in Bohemia and Moravia on account of Tiso. If a greater proportion did in fact

survive in the Slovak Republic, it was certainly not thanks to Father Tiso's government, which by common agreement was one of the most barbaric of all collaborationist regimes in its treatment of Jews. As to numbers: according to Anna Josko, formerly of the Library of Congress (writing in Victor Mamatey and Radomir Luza's collection *A History of the Czechoslovak Republic*), the number of Jewish victims of the Tiso regime sent to Auschwitz and Lublin had reached 57,837 by October of 1942. The number of victims in the post-uprising roundup of 1944, conducted by the Tiso regime with German assistance, is estimated at about 15,000. The figure of 75,000 was provided by the Center for Holocaust Studies at the B'nai B'rith Anti-Defamation League. According to Benjamin Eichler of the Central Union of Jewish Committees, after assimilation, emigration and extermination, 4,000 of the 89,000 pre-war Jews in Slovakia remained after 1945.

Stolarik can have his quibble about the Czechoslovak nation. The Slovak Republic was indeed declared on March 14, 1939; the Constitution was promulgated in July. Stolarik is technically correct about Bohemia's predominant religious confession, though the Hussite spirit is of profound importance and it was Stolarik who told my colleague Francis Wilkinson that it was traditionally Protestant and that the inhabitants of Bohemia "never really took" to Catholicism.

Alexander Cockburn

## 'ON TARGET'

Houston

Alexander Cockburn's discussion of the mainstream press's neglect of the aerial bombing of civilians in El Salvador was, as usual, on target ["Beat the Devil," June 1]. Cockburn contrasts this neglect with the massive news coverage of the bombing of Move headquarters in Philadelphia, which he calls "the first urban aerial bombardment in U.S. history." In fact, it was not. In May 1921, Tulsa, Oklahoma, was the first U.S. city to be bombed from the air. The immediate cause was a race riot set off when a white elevator operator accused Dick Rowland, a 19-year-old black, of attacking her. The police responded by commandeering private planes and dropping dynamite on the black business district, one of the most successful in the country. More than 4,000 blacks were arrested and interned in three camps. The bombing and subsequent rezone ing totally destroyed Tulsa's prosperous black business community. Nia George

*The Nation* welcomes letters—typed, double spaced and no longer than 300 words, please. Letters may be edited for reasons of space.

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# EDITORIALS.

## Salvador Heats Up

The June 19 guerrilla attack on U.S. marines, American civilians and Salvadoran citizens in three crowded San Salvador cafes was a bloody act of war, but it was also a demonstration of the political dynamic taking shape in that revolution-torn Central American nation. Far from a last desperate fling at terrorism for the beleaguered guerrillas, as the State Department has been telling reporters, it may be the beginning of a convulsive new stage of the conflict. Until last month, twelve Americans—only one of them in the military—had been killed in seven years of fighting in El Salvador; now U.S. casualties are likely to mount.

The "massacre" at the cafes in the popular Zona Rosa area marks the return of guerrilla warfare to the capital city and puts San Salvador again at the center of radical political activity. In the early 1980s, with the rise of the right-wing death squads and the failure of the left's plans for a final assault leading to revolution, the several component groups of the F.M.L.N. moved to the mountains and widened their base in "zones of control." Pressured by the United States, urban politicians held a series of elections, and although the left was excluded many radicals hoped that a victory for the Christian Democrats would lead to negotiations and the suppression of the death squads. Their optimism rose when newly elected José Napoleón Duarte met with guerrilla leaders in La Palma in what was supposed to be the start of a dialogue leading to national reconciliation.

That first step was never followed by others toward the negotiating table. At the same time as he was proclaiming dialogue and democracy, Duarte was planning a massive escalation of the war, with U.S. economic aid and logistic support. Vietnam-style terror bombing of peasant villages and army attacks on civilians eliminated any possibility of a peaceful settlement. The rebel areas became free-fire zones, and the guerrillas were forced to go on the defensive.

In the meantime, Duarte's considerable urban support began to erode as the promise of peace faded and the prospects for economic betterment dimmed. Last spring a wave of strikes inundated the major cities as the labor unions, which had been quiet during the years of severe repression, suddenly came to life. Guerrilla leaders began streaming back to town with the object of radicalizing the revived opposition.

The F.M.L.N. leaders have so far been unable to coordinate the tactics of their constituent parties, factions and commando brigades. The People's Revolutionary Army (E.R.P.), which was instrumental in forming the armed guerrilla movement in the early 1970s, is now organizing urban labor. The Revolutionary Party of Central American Workers is believed responsible for the attacks on the marines, and although the F.M.L.N. did not dissociate itself from that violent action, neither did the coalition leaders plan it or approve it beforehand.

The Popular Liberation Forces (F.P.L.) claimed responsibility for the assassination of U.S. Lieut. Comdr. Albert A. Schaufelberger 3d last year, and the E.R.P. has kidnapped more than a dozen Christian Democratic mayors over the past several months; one was killed, four were released and the rest are still being held captive. In the guerrilla free-for-all, members of splinter commando teams roam the streets taking potshots at targets of opportunity.

As the atmosphere becomes more heated, the police and the death squads, which Duarte promised to rein in, are returning in force. Their activities are bound to provoke retaliatory violence by the guerrillas and to radicalize the nonrevolutionary opposition. Correspondents in the capital report that the government is sounding more right-wing again, that plans are under way to form an "antiterrorist" police unit with training and technological help from Washington and that the death squads are believed to be planning new atrocities. Meanwhile, the country has become a center for export of counterrevolution to Nicaragua, and Duarte's tenuous center is shrinking. Two days after the cafe attack, San Salvador's influential Archbishop Arturo Rivera y Damas shocked the nation by blaming the army, and by extension the military strategy designed and coordinated by the United States, for the guerrilla violence. In a homily, the Archbishop preached, "It would be hypocrisy to condemn the terrorism of the left without at the same time condemning the terrorism of the extreme right and the army."

The shooting, he said, "is exactly the same as the acts of the army, the bombing, the destruction of cultivation and the forced removal of the population." In the week of the T.W.A. hijacking and the Reagan Administration's global propaganda campaign against its Third World enemies, those were brave—and perhaps dangerous—words.

## Never on Sunday

It has been a busy time for the National Boycott Agency of the Federal Embargo Commission in the U.S. Department of Quarantine and Retaliation. No sooner had President Tit for Tat found Athens airport unfit for American travel than all hell broke loose, and close to home. A man with a gun breezed past a platoon of security guards at the State Department in Washington, ascended swiftly to the seventh floor, where Secretary Shultz has his eagle's nest, and shot and killed his mother and himself. Then two jumbo jets left Canadian airports apparently with a deadly bomb in their cargoes. Will Toronto, Vancouver and Foggy Bottom now be placed off limits? Will the Yankees have to cancel their next away game with the Blue Jays? These are difficult questions and perilous policies to decide.

If the Administration were seriously concerned about airport security, it would have banned travel to many of America's own terminals long ago. As Melina Mercouri, the Greek Minister of Culture, pointed out, "Only two hijackings have originated in Greece during the years that thirty-six occurred in the U.S." And in any case, the weapons aboard T.W.A. Flight 847 probably were loaded on the plane before it reached Athens. But, then, the facts are irrelevant. President Reagan is obviously using these chance occurrences for a bit of Greek-bashing and Socialist-baiting to take his mind off the very real problems in Beirut, where his actions are circumscribed.

The Greeks have a word for it, from which "hypocrisy" is appropriately derived. Minister Mercouri is justifiably angered at the U.S. boycott, however informally it is being enforced, but her compatriots are hurt even more by the decision of the New York Philharmonic to follow the President's travel advisory and cancel its performances at the Athens Festival, which were to begin Sunday, June 23. Zubin Mehta, the orchestra's music director, said the decision to cancel the tour was made because the musicians feared for their safety, and Albert Webster, the managing director, said, "Our music is not political in any way." Their protestations sound a lot like Jimmy Carter's in 1980 and Konstantin Chernenko's in 1984 to the effect that sport is not political in any way and that the American and Soviet boycotts of the Olympics were called to secure the safety of the athletes. Aristophanes, thou shouldst be living at this hour! And let's hope you can get a visa to the States.

## The Right War

Col. Gains Hawkins was in New York City three weeks ago to address a meeting of the National Coalition Against Censorship. Hawkins, you may recall, was last on public view here testifying as a witness for CBS in Gen. William Westmoreland's libel suit. Westmoreland, who saw the manipulation of estimates of enemy troop strength as a matter between West Pointers,

was stunned by his fellow alum's recounting of the facts. Hawkins, it seems, had a closer relationship with reality than did his commanding officer.

Hawkins is currently pursuing that relationship in another West Point—his hometown in northeast Mississippi. Seems that an organization called Morality in America went to war against the girlie magazines and raunchy comic books offered for sale in local stores. As one of the group's leaders explained, "Censorship is a way of life in America."

Hawkins didn't think so. Neither did Owens McCollum, owner of McCollum Drugs and the only merchant in town to resist the group's pressure. McCollum thought he had the right to sell, and his customers to buy, anything that is legal. Concerned that so many West Pointers privately opposed Morality in America's actions but were unwilling to say so out loud, the two men founded Commonsense Unlimited. As an organization, Commonsense got equal time in the pages of the local newspaper, and in interviews Hawkins pointed out the dangers that Morality in America posed to free speech and a free press. Gradually the hate mail addressed to McCollum Drugs stopped, the antiporn preacher's televised sermon hour was dropped and *Playboy* and *Penthouse* reappeared on magazine racks all over town.

Although some of his friends and enemies now call him the Sultan of Smut, Colonel Hawkins told the National Coalition Against Censorship's spring luncheon that the experience was "a small victory in a small battle in the continuing large war which must be waged throughout this nation to combat the ever-present and ever-recurring assaults on First Amendment rights which are so essential to the preservation of freedom in this nation." These days Colonel Hawkins is fighting a far more honorable war than the one in Southeast Asia.

## 'Vote for Peace'?

In lining up supporters for the June 12 vote in the House on "nonlethal" aid to the Nicaraguan *contras*, President Reagan assured wavering members that he did not seek the military overthrow of the Sandinistas, saying that approving the aid would be a vote for peace. Many fence-sitters bought that line. Representative Bill Richardson said, "The President for the first time is saying that he is for negotiations and meaning it." The Congress members should have looked at the record. Even a cursory review of it explodes the Administration's protestations that it wants a diplomatic solution. In April 1981, for example, it said that it had cut off aid to the Sandinistas because they had refused to heed warnings to stop shipping arms to Salvadoran guerrillas. Not true, according to Lawrence Pezzullo, U.S. Ambassador in Managua at the time. To keep the dialogue alive, Pezzullo says, the Sandinistas had agreed to most of the U.S. demands. Even as it announced the aid cutoff, the Administration acknowledged that it had received "no hard evidence of arms movements . . . during the past few weeks" and that other forms

of support for the Salvadoran rebels had been "curtailed."

When the Sandinistas sent a note in August 1982 offering to negotiate all outstanding issues between the two governments, the Administration did not even reply. Nor did it respond to the Sandinistas' announcement the following December that they would forgo the acquisition of MIG aircraft in the hope of improving the atmosphere for talks. An even more sweeping Nicaraguan overture in October 1983 was also rebuffed. That month, Foreign Affairs Minister Miguel D'Escoto presented a series of draft treaties to the State Department, providing, among other things, for the termination of all support to guerrillas operating anywhere in the region, for the prohibition of foreign bases, for on-site verification and for the Contadora countries to act as guarantors. One would have expected the State Department to examine the proposals and discuss them thoroughly with the Nicaraguans. It did not. They were rejected out of hand. Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs Langhorne Motley described them as "part of a campaign of deception."

A few months later, the United States mined Nicaraguan harbors, leading to an international scandal. In defending the mining, President Reagan angrily claimed that such actions were necessary as long as Nicaragua continued to export revolution. He offered no evidence that Nicaragua was exporting revolution, however, nor did he explain why it was necessary for the United States to exert military pressure after the Sandinistas had offered to negotiate.

Even when the Administration finally acceded to requests from Mexico and other friendly nations last year and opened direct U.S.-Nicaraguan talks in Manzanillo, Mexico, it made certain those talks would go nowhere by putting forward such one-sided and impossible demands that the Sandinistas could not accept them. For example, it insisted that all Soviet bloc military personnel be withdrawn from Nicaragua but promised nothing in return, saying only that it would "take that into account." Eventually, U.S. representatives walked out of the talks, claiming the Sandinistas were not negotiating seriously and that bilateral talks undercut the Contadora process. It took considerable chutzpah to make the latter charge, since the Sandinistas had accepted the Contadora treaties.

The Administration has sold Congress on the idea that it simply wants to pressure the Sandinistas into negotiating. Given the Reaganites' past record, it is difficult not to conclude that they will continue to feign interest in diplomacy while pursuing a policy of crushing the Sandinistas, an objective which the *contras* cannot achieve on their own. The President may be telling the truth when he says he is opposed to overthrowing the Sandinista government by military force, but the internal contradictions of his policy are carrying him inexorably in that direction—and with even more impetus after the House of Representatives' "vote for peace."

WAYNE S. SMITH

*Wayne S. Smith was senior U.S. diplomat in Havana from 1979 until 1982. He is currently scholar in residence at the Washington Office on Latin America.*

# BEAT THE DEVIL.

(Continued From Front Cover)

What has emerged since the start of the trial? To the mortification of the prosecution, Agca immediately announced that he was Jesus Christ and has most recently proposed that he demonstrate his resurrecting technique for President Reagan, who is, after all, old enough to be interested in such skills. What U.S. newspapers failed to report is that this identification with the Godhead is not some sudden and surprising disturbance in Agca's mental equilibrium. Turkish journalists at his 1980 trial for the murder of the newspaper editor Abdi Ipecki have stressed that Agca exhibited traits of megalomania and instability. The only person who may not have been discommoded by Agca's claims to be Christ is Claire Sterling, who has always taken his words as gospel and who presumably attributes to divine powers his capacity to move undetected around Europe and across wide bodies of water such as the Mediterranean Sea.

Agca had a second surprise for the eager journalists in court: the disclosure of his direct contact with the K.G.B. in Sofia in July of 1980. The weight of this disclosure was undercut by the fact that he had said this before and had subsequently retracted it. But the explosive aspect of events unfolding in Rome has been the increasing evidence that during the long months of his incarceration, Agca was coached by agents of the highly politicized and rightist SISMI, the military branch of Italian intelligence. This is entirely contrary to the image of Agca's isolation promoted by Sterling and the rest of the conspiracy mongers. By their accounts Agca was held incommunicado in a sterile cell, divulging elements of the great plot which were then patiently corroborated by the tireless Judge Ilario Martella. The purity of Agca's recollection about the Bulgarian connection became virtually an article of faith in much of the Western media, even though he developed these recollections only after spending eighteen months in an Italian jail and though to this day they have never been corroborated by any external evidence.

## Who Coached Agca?

It has already been well established that Agca got much of his "uncanny command of detail" from such useful and unsterile sources as Italian television (available in prison), Italian newspapers (ditto) and a telephone book decently made available to him by his translator. The path to Agca's cell was a well-trodden one, with intelligence emissaries dropping in for a chat without the knowledge of the egregious Martella. But Agca has given detailed descriptions of the Bulgarian Sergei Antonov's apartment and of the physical circumstances of a "plot" to kill Lech Walesa when the latter was visiting Rome. He later retracted the stories (as he has those of plots to kill Queen Elizabeth, Tunisian President Bourguiba and others), explaining that he got the supporting details from the newspapers. But it has been shown that such details had never appeared in the press.

From whom, then, did he get those details? On June 16 the Italian magazine *L'Espresso* announced that it was

about to publish some startling assertions by Giovanni Pandico, the state's main witness in a trial in Naples against the Mafia. Pandico asserted that Pietro Musumeci, deputy chief of military intelligence (SISMI), had used a Mafia chieftain to approach Agca in the Ascoli Piceno prison in March 1982 to offer him his freedom in return for implicating the Soviet bloc in the plot to kill the Pope. (Agca began to recall the Bulgarian connection shortly after that date.) *L'Espresso* reported Pandico's story in its issue appearing on June 17. The same day, Agca, reacting to Judge Santiapichi's call for *pazienza* ("patience"), announced that Francesco Pazienza had visited him at Ascoli Piceno and offered him his freedom in return for evidence of the K.G.B.-Bulgarian connection. It was at this point that John Tagliabue, one of the *New York Times* reporters covering the trial, conceded in an offhand way that the Ascoli Piceno prison is notoriously "porous," although *The Times* has for months been featuring Claire Sterling, who claims just the opposite. Through his lawyers in New York City, Pazienza has laughed off Agca's allegations.

## The Rome-Washington Connection

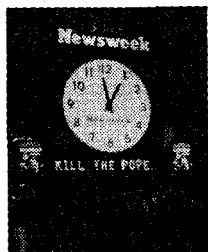
SISMI, Musumeci and Pazienza bring us to one of the widest and most sinister postwar Italian conspiracies. Pazienza, a businessman with close ties to the Mafia and to SISMI, was involved in Propaganda Doue, or P-2, the quasi-Masonic lodge headed by the fascist Licio Gelli, which, in the words of an Italian parliamentary inquiry, had come close to achieving "surreptitious and complete control" of the Italian state apparatus by the time it was exposed in 1981. The purpose of this control, stretching across the judiciary and government agencies, including security forces, was to thwart any opening toward the left and establish permanent right-wing control of the state.

The politically well-connected Pazienza was a close associate of the former head of SISMI, Gen. Guiseppe Santovito, and of Musumeci; and the three of them belonged to an inner *camarilla* at the organization, known as Super-S, which indulged in freelance black-bag operations and disinformation projects. Just five days after Agca wounded the Pope, on May 13, 1981, SISMI put out a story saying that the assassination bid had been inspired by the Warsaw Pact powers in a meeting attended by Soviet Defense Minister Dmitri Ustinov and that the plan had been to wound His Holiness in order to intimidate Solidarity. The first public suggestion of a Bulgarian connection was made by the Italian Minister of Defense on British television in November 1981. Paul Henze, of whom more later, was the first American to hint at a K.G.B. connection, in a column that October in *The Wall Street Journal*.

Pazienza was also a friend of Michael Ledeen. In Ledeen, we encounter a particularly unattractive freebooter in the new cold war, one of the most dedicated architects of Terror International. He studied for some years in Italy, contributed to the right-wing paper *Il Giornale Nuovo* and came home in the late 1970s to roost at the Georgetown

## ALEXANDER COCKBURN

Center for Strategic and International Studies (C.S.I.S.), where he helped produce the *Washington Quarterly*. He was the ideological gopher for Henry Kissinger's NBC series on the Eurocommunist menace and ended up working for Alexander Haig at the State Department's Office of Security before returning to more strictly private enterprise. Subsequently, he contracted with the State Department to evaluate and anthologize documents captured by the United States during the invasion of Grenada and, most recently, entered negotiations in Hollywood for a movie about the Bulgarian connection.



If the deal goes through, Ledeen may have some problems with location filming. According to the Italian press, last summer Adm. Fulvio Martini, a clean-broom boss of SISMI, told a parliamentary committee that Ledeen was persona non grata in Italy as "an intriguer." The press also raised questions about possibly well-paid contractual work that Ledeen, through Pazienza, did for SISMI. Ledeen has denied receiving any money. According to one account, he had the code name Z-3 in SISMI. In the wake of the revelations of the P-2 scandal, the comfortable world of SISMI fell apart. Pazienza faced charges of fraud. He left the country and is being held for extradition in New York City. Pazienza helped Ledeen in setting up Billy Carter in the Billygate affair—a story on which Ledeen worked with Arnaud de Borchgrave just before the 1980 election.

### The Gray Wolves of Georgetown

So, if the Bulgarian connection is falling apart, an Italian-U.S. connection in the manufacture of Agca's Communist backing is now coming into increasingly high profile.

The U.S. functionaries in the conspiracy are a tightly knit lot: Sterling, Henze, Ledeen, de Borchgrave, Kalb. Kalb, Henze and de Borchgrave were on the C.S.I.S. steering committee on terrorism which issued a report at the end of last year anticipating courtroom proof of the Bulgarian connection and drawing suitably apocalyptic conclusions. And these zealots for the K.G.B.-Bulgarian plot have been the "authorities" to whom the U.S. media have regularly turned for analysis.

Claire Sterling is perhaps the best known example here. Ever since she expounded the "connection" in *Reader's Digest*, she has been, for all intents and purposes, a member of the prosecution. Nonetheless, she has doubled up as a supposedly unbiased reporter for *The New York Times* and a commentator for various network news programs. Even more amazing has been the progress of Paul Henze. This man has actually been named in *The Times* as the C.I.A.'s station chief in Turkey and has had a long career in U.S. propaganda, among others, Radio Free Europe, where he worked in Munich from 1952 to 1958. Despite this *curriculum vitae*, which might be thought damaging to his credentials as an objective commentator on a K.G.B.

"plot," and despite his clear self-interest as the author of a book on the "plot," Henze has been retained as a consultant by *Reader's Digest*, *The Times*, NBC and *Newsweek*. Both he and Sterling have appeared on *The MacNeil-Lehrer News Hour*, with no hint of their compromised positions and with no "balance" to contest their assertions. The show has not even bothered to respond to complaints about its bias.

It was to another "objective" source, the novelist Arnaud de Borchgrave, that the Italian prosecutors went in search of testimony about the K.G.B. terror agenda, and it was de Borchgrave whom these same prosecutors proclaimed to be a man of unimpeachable reliability. De Borchgrave told them that an associate in French intelligence, Alexandre de Marenches, had vainly attempted to warn the Vatican of Agca's impending attack. But according to Italian reports, de Marenches is a friend of Pazienza and of the people in SISMI, and thus it is likely that, once more, "independent testimony" turns out to be the endlessly recycled disinformation of the right-wing conspirators. Finally, Ledeen wrote an article in *Commentary* in June 1983 furiously denouncing liberal journalists for failing to attach proper credence to the great conspiracy first proposed by Santovito's SISMI, with which he had a close relationship.

### Burn, Baby, Burn

At this point, *The New York Times*, NBC and others have become so heavily committed to the Bulgarian connection that it is difficult for them to extricate themselves from the wreckage without grave loss of credibility. Meanwhile, the premise and bogus methodology of the "terror connection" have taken firm hold. The terror model to which the media automatically turn in their hour of need is the one fashioned by the ideologues of the new cold war, with special input from Israel in such forums as the Jonathan Institute.

Part of the problem is that too many careers and reputations, including those of almost everyone who ever buffed Kissinger's boots at C.S.I.S., depend on the terror connection and on punditry about "terrorism," the new mother lode of grant contracts and gravy by the barrel. This industry will survive despite Agca's collapse.

"Terrorism" has been a central preoccupation of the Reaganites. The concept is truly totalitarian. It avoids moral responsibility (who was the greater "terrorist" in El Salvador or South Lebanon?), rejects logic (the "terrorist act" never has a cause) and, in the end, produces the mentality and morality of the war criminal, as was made apparent in the disgusting June 19 CBS documentary, "Terrorism: War in the Shadows." Kissinger henchman Lawrence Eagleburger called for assassination to become official U.S. policy, and Robert Kupperman (C.S.I.S.) said that the war against terrorism would involve "charred babies." These charred babies would be on TV. "Can we withstand that?" asked Kupperman. "Do we have enough confidence in ourselves as a nation and are [we] willing to take enough risks, and don't have this incredible guilt from Vietnam days?" Mr. Rambo, please light the grill.

# MINORITY REPORT.

CHRISTOPHER HITCHENS

**T**he whole misery and disgrace of current U.S. involvement with the "wrong side" in Central America began with the invasion of Guatemala (sometimes described as the coup in Guatemala) in 1954. This invasion/coup was brought off by the usual suspects—Vice President Richard Nixon, the C.I.A., the United Fruit Company and other practitioners of destabilization. Even today, the more polished conservatives have to repress a shudder at the recollections of 1954 and its aftermath.

But in *Bitter Fruit*, their exemplary account of the Guatemalan intervention, Stephen Schlesinger and Stephen Kinzer also describe how solicitous the destabilizers were to the small but significant forces of liberalism and social democracy in the United States. They relate that Edward Bernays, chief lobbyist of the forces seeking to overthrow the elected government of Jacobo Arbenz,

had an especially close relationship with *The New Leader*, a vigorously anti-Communist liberal weekly. . . . Bernays persuaded the Fruit Company to sponsor public service advertisements on behalf of the Red Cross and U.S. Savings Bonds in the magazine at \$1,000 a page, far above the going rate. *The New Leader* . . . carried numerous articles, both before and after the coup, justifying intervention against Arbenz's regime on the grounds that a Soviet takeover was imminent.

A managing editor of *The New Leader* in the 1950s, Daniel James, wrote a book titled *Red Design for the Americas*, which provided a rationale for the destruction of Guatemalan democracy. United Fruit and the C.I.A. cooperated to insure that this luminous work had a wide distribution.

I thought continually of this episode as I attended the national convention of Social Democrats, U.S.A., held in Washington from June 14 to 16. This organization, which might better be known as Social Democrats, U.S.A.! U.S.A.! and which has the crust to claim descent from the party of Debs and Thomas, is little understood or studied but highly influential. Combining the worst of old left sectarian venom with the cheapest line in neoconservative platitudes, S.D.,U.S.A. has provided the intellectual context for Jeane Kirkpatrick and some useful cover for other Humphrey-Jackson Democrats in transition. In transition to what? Well, their guru, Carl Gershman, held Kirkpatrick's fragrant coat at the United Nations for many years, served the Kissinger commission on Central America and now heads Reagan's National Endowment for Democracy. In other words, don't be fooled by the fact that the mode of address at S.D.,U.S.A. meetings is still "comrade."

There's a lot not to be fooled by at these affairs. Alfonso Robelo had been invited as the star guest, to do for the *contras* what his 1954 predecessors did for Castillo Armas. He gave a bland speech, sounding for all the world as if the campaign against Nicaragua was being waged by members of the Young Social Democrats and the more highly evolved forces of the Socialist International. He lauded the Lew Lehrman coalition of anti-Soviet guerrillas (incidentally, I do not see how any of that bunch could have got into

Angola without being taken through occupied Namibia by the South Africans).

When I asked him about the "social democratic" leadership of Col. Enrique Bermúdez, ~~he~~ became ever so slightly less silky. To keep harping on about the Somoza National Guard, he said, was like saying that all the Wehrmacht were responsible for war crimes. This Bitburg reference, probably intended for a later speech at the convention of Young Americans for Fascism, may have just slipped out, but I didn't notice any of the Social Democrats objecting. They didn't even raise a murmur when Robelo claimed to have investigated all the former Guardsmen in the F.D.N. and found them blameless of atrocities under Somoza.

Your typical Social Democrat has a wisened-up, pitying manner. You are looking at someone, he seems to say, who has left illusions behind him. No flies can settle on this smirking countenance. Don't you know, the face seems to ask, that the world is a dangerous place? Haven't you read *The Gulag Archipelago*? Ever heard of the boat people? Don't you want America to be strong? Aren't you aware that you can't demonstrate for nuclear disarmament in the Soviet Union? At about this point, and to distract myself from the overmastering desire to slap the face, I imagine myself demonstrating for nuclear disarmament in the Soviet Union and being locked up by someone with precisely those features and that tone of voice.

But, in fact, for all their worldly wisdom, the S.D.s are extremely naïve. They are the useful idiots of the Reagan revolution. They were the last political formation in America to realize that the Vietnam War was not being fought by democratic forces or for democratic ends. Many of them still feel that with a bit more "political will" (favorite S.D. and neocon term) the trick might have been pulled off. They have a utopian and protective attitude toward Israel which in its myopia rivals that of any old party hack toward the Soviet Union. They think that Jean-François Revel is a new philosopher. They think that Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn is a social democrat, though some of them have suppressed worries about his attitude toward the Vlasovites. They think they "saw through" Carter and McGovern before anyone else did, but they modestly understate the role in Democrats for Nixon.

Intellectually contemptible though they may be, the Social Democrats shine like pearls among the Reaganite swirl. Left to itself, the old conservative movement could not have come up with fluent twisters like Kirkpatrick, Eli Abrams and Max Kampelman, nor mastered a standard apologetics anywhere near that of *Commentary* or the Committee for the Free World. A certain vital patina has been provided to this government of Christian big and thwarted militarists by an ostensibly secular, internationalist political tendency. As with Guatemala or Vietnam, the S.D.s will be somewhere else while the slaughtering is done—probably accusing the journalists report it of "blaming America first." But as with Guatemala and Vietnam, they show that every little bit help

## ARTICLES.

## ■ POLITICS OF TRANSCENDENCE

# Religious Revival On the Left

MICHAEL FERBER

For the third time in as many centuries, some religious historians argue, America is undergoing a profound religious revival. Just how profound it is, or what the social and political consequences will be, it is too soon to say, but the resurgence is far from a monolithic reactionary movement and includes a strong trend toward the left. Movements for social justice and disarmament can be found in nearly every religious organization in the country.

Even some fundamentalists and evangelicals are deeply opposed to the rightward politics of the mainstream of their sects and insist that the Bible itself points in another direction. When Ronald Reagan denounced the Soviet Union as "the focus of evil in the modern world" at a conference of evangelicals in 1983, the applause was not unanimous. A minority of those present denounced his statement as a heresy, since it ascribed the attributes of the Devil to worldly beings and confined sinfulness to one place. Another of Reagan's perversions of Scripture, his identification of the Soviet Union with the Gog and Magog of Revelation, prompted some evangelicals to point out that there are as many as 50 million Christians in the Soviet Union. Of course, Jerry Falwell has an answer to that: the Soviet Christians will be rescued in the final "rapture," when American H-bombs destroy their country.

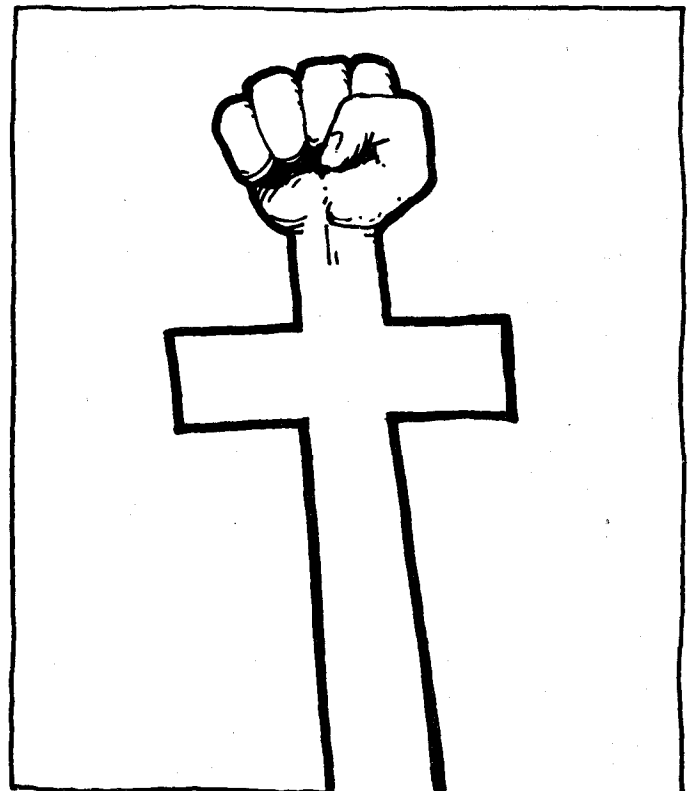
Not all conservative sects share Falwell's views on the bomb. The Southern Baptist Peacemaker network has some 40,000 members, and the Christian Life Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention has encouraged churchgoers to take seriously the Christian call to make peace and do justice. *Sojourners* and *The Other Side*, two leading journals of the new movements, are thriving, the former with more than 50,000 subscribers. Evangelicals for Social Action, a small but energetic group with about thirty chapters, takes a traditional view of the family and personal morality but has published criticism of America's militarized foreign policy and its contempt for the world's poor. World Peacemakers, a similar group with a somewhat narrower agenda, has been carefully nurturing antiwar groups in churches of nearly every Protestant denomination.

Witness for Peace has sent more than 1,200 laypeople and clergy as observers to the northern and southern borders of

Nicaragua, where the *contras* are active. Other religious groups have brought many hundreds more not only to Nicaragua but to El Salvador and Honduras. More than 65,000 people have signed the Pledge of Resistance, a statement promising civil disobedience or legal protest in the event that the United States escalates military involvement in Central America. About half the signatories have pledged their readiness to be arrested.

Since the Vietnam War, interfaith groups, whether local councils or national networks like Clergy and Laity Concerned, have coordinated the energies of the majority of religious peace and justice activists. Religious people who wished to retain their denominational identities joined one of the peace groups affiliated with the Fellowship of Reconciliation, such as the Baptist, Lutheran, Jewish or Catholic Peace Fellowships. During the past four or five years, several major denominations have moved to establish their own peace and justice networks, backed by synod or convention resolutions and substantial funding. The United Church of Christ has a Peace Priority program with a legislative alert network organized by Congressional districts. The Presbyterians, Episcopalians and Unitarians have similar programs; others are planning them. Most of the mainline Protestant churches have offices in both New York City and Washington and regularly share resources and lobby Congress together. Meanwhile, the independent peace fellowships have been growing: the Episcopal Peace Fellowship, for example, has expanded from twenty-five chapters two years ago to more than sixty.

The most spectacular example of religious opposition to U.S. foreign policy is the sanctuary movement. As of last



DRAWINGS BY TONY AUTH

Michael Ferber is assistant director of the Coalition for a New Foreign and Military Policy in Washington. His book, *The Social Vision of William Blake*, will be published this summer by Princeton University Press.

month more than 1,300 local congregations, Catholic, Protestant and Jewish, had declared their support for sanctuaries of conscience for Central American refugees whose lives would be endangered if they were deported. Indictments of several local leaders of the movement have not slowed it much, for nearly every day churches and synagogues announce their participation. "Resistance" is now commonplace in the rhetoric of many quite respectable church representatives, and some mainline denominations, including the Presbyterian Church and the United Church of Christ, are studying the implications of becoming confessionally or creedally pacifist or anti-interventionist.

Whatever the theological consequences to those churches, the Reagan Administration has begun to feel the political consequences. The Catholic bishops' 1982 pastoral letter on war and peace put the Catholic Church on a collision course with the White House. The Berrigan tradition, born during the Vietnam War (as was the sanctuary movement, which helped draft resisters and AWOL soldiers), has nourished a new generation of activist-witnesses willing to risk years in prison for the sake of damaging a nuclear submarine or re-entry vehicle. Government buildings and military bases have become the staging ground for mass sit-ins as part of annual "Peace Pentecosts," and the "white train" carrying nuclear warheads is regularly greeted and stopped by Christian groups along its route from Texas to the Puget Sound.

So far this year the new church activists have dealt President Reagan one defeat. In April their lobbying was crucial in persuading the House to vote down his request for military aid to the *contras*, 248 to 180. (The Republican compromise, providing "nonlethal" aid, was also initially defeated, though it went through in June after a major effort by the White House.) On the eve of the April vote, Langhorne Motley, then Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, complained, "Taking on the churches is really tough. . . . They are really formidable." Nor is he the first high-level official to say so. As reported in the January issue of *Sojourners*, a top-ranking general speaking to 200 military leaders at the National War College last winter said, "The greatest challenge to all that we do now comes from within the churches."

Religious activism on domestic issues has also burgeoned. There is probably more progressive involvement by religious people in causes like hunger, homelessness, plant closings and nuclear power than on foreign policy questions, but I have concentrated on the latter in the interest of brevity and because they demonstrate more strikingly the extent to which churchpeople are willing to challenge the right.

The upsurge of liberal social activism among religious Americans is not necessarily the third Great Awakening, but it may be a sign. In the past few years, the most rapidly growing denominations have been the conservative evangelical and fundamentalist churches; however, their momentum seems to be slowing, while the long decline of the Catholic and mainline Protestant churches appears to be bottoming out. National church attendance has remained steady over the past ten years. We also see a "warming" of the cooler established denominations, a greater

spirituality among those whom evangelicals sometimes call God's Frozen People. The sects that sprang up in such profusion in the 1960s still leaven the religious world; some draw their adherents to progressive social causes. The religious situation is in flux and likely to remain so for quite a while, but it is yeasty with hope for a humane social transformation.

The main traditions of the American left during this century have been secular, if not antireligious, and for obvious reasons. Influenced by socialist and anarchist movements in Europe which took anticlericalism for granted as part of their own Enlightenment heritage, the American movements shared the liberal confidence in progress through technology that swept aside Old World habits of thought often grounded in religion. Marxism and then Marxism-Leninism brought atheism to the fore in socialist thought. Leninism was particularly intolerant of religious beliefs because of the stifling presence of an Erastian or state-dominated church in Russia. For Southern European immigrants, who made up a large component of the American left, the memory of the reactionary Catholic Church in their homelands made them hostile to churches of all kinds in their new country.

There have been plenty of reactionary, obscurantist and totalitarian currents in American religion, but its heart beats with a restless and rebellious spirit; it is suspicious of governments and respectful of conscience, or what the Southern Baptists call "soul competency"; it is individualist, schismatic, even anarchistic. Many of the colonies were founded by dissident Protestant sects, and something of their tone and attitude has passed into nearly every other denomination—Jewish, Catholic and Orthodox—and even into the American branches of the churches the dissidents originally fled.

At best, most members of the traditional left give a polite welcome to religious activists as allies on this or that issue. Granting their good will but not taking them seriously as political thinkers, leftists sometimes do not take their beliefs seriously either. Church affiliation is regarded as a quaint inconsistency or a social hypocrisy. There is condescension, often justified, toward churchpeople's ineffectual ways of social witness. But such attitudes are shortsighted. The secular left does not comprehend the distinctive qualities of the American religious situation, the gifts that the religious left may offer and the secularists' need of those gifts.

The left must recognize three things, and I will risk overstating them for the sake of argument. First, the religious left is the only left we've got. There are a few labor unions still willing to take strong stands and many individuals and locals working for progressive agendas within other unions, but it is hardly news to point out that organized labor is no longer the home of the left. There are remnants of the old left as well as old left ideological spinoffs in the contemporary Leninist sects, but neither has any power beyond influencing and disrupting larger groups. There are members of the New Left throughout academia, unions, the professions and government; they have some weight overall but they tend to concentrate in only a few cities (and many

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of them are active church members). There is a political resurgence on campus, especially on the issue of divestment from South Africa, but it is too soon to tell how large it will become. The black community has held firm in the midst of the national infatuation with Reaganism, and Jesse Jackson's Presidential campaign and the South Africa issue have partly remobilized it. The black community will certainly be key in any left-wing revival, but it can hardly go it alone (of course, many black activists are organized around churches, and Jackson is a Baptist minister).

In 1900, historian Werner Sombart asked why there was no socialism in the United States. One of his answers was that there had been no feudalism in the United States, hence no tradition of class or caste solidarity against the ruling elite. Another answer, not unrelated, is that there were lots of churches in the United States and everybody went to them. De Tocqueville was struck by this as soon as he arrived. The orthodox leftist view is that religion has pre-empted true class consciousness and socialist ideals, but a more properly dialectical view suggests that the churches—and we must remember these were often radical, dissenting sects—have preserved class consciousness and even socialist ideals in some form, and have kept them available during periods when the secular left was defeated or quiescent. However we formulate it, and even if we take a bleak view of the prospects for social change in America, I would guess that of every five people actively working for progressive causes, at least three draw energy and conviction from their religious beliefs.

Second, churches and synagogues provide a space that is relatively untouched by the commercialization of the larger society. When the sanctuary movement started in 1968, some of us who were active in it were struck by the close resemblance between the theology of sanctuary and Herbert Marcuse's search for "moments of negation," forces in advanced capitalist society that could not be co-opted. Marcuse might have had doubts about churches, but we felt they could be centers of a counterculture, pockets of resistance not easily digestible by the dominant bureaucratic culture which was responsible for crimes in Vietnam and the wasteland of consumerism at home.

What else do the churches preserve? Philosopher Ludwig Feuerbach's famous thesis that the secret of theology is anthropology might be reversed. Religion may be a projection of the alienated essence of humanity, as he said, and the task of humanity may be to recover that essence and become truly human. But in an era when forces much more powerful than religion have drained us or terrorized us into subhuman conditions, the treasury of religious thought, imagery and example could help nurse us back to health. William Sloane Coffin's remark is apt: "People tell me, 'Oh, the church is just a crutch.' And I say, 'True, but what makes you think you don't limp?'" It may not be because of sin that we limp, but we limp, and some churchpeople would define sin as a state not so different from the alienated, one-dimensional, male-supremacist, imperialist and technocratic world the left has been at pains to describe.

One thing the church preserves is the idea of transcend-

ence, and not only the idea of it but a feeling for it. Now, it is precisely transcendence that Marxist theory attacks, perhaps most thoroughly in Georg Lukács's *History and Class Consciousness*, as a mythical notion that bars a true grasp of humanity in its concrete historical setting: whether it is God, Hegel's Absolute Mind, the "Ought" of classical ethics or a norm of human nature, belief in a transcendental being or value is only the sign of an illusory or ideological relationship to the social world. But Marxist theory has its own transcendent norm: history itself, and the faith that it will come out right and justify the crimes and sufferings along its path. It also has a surreptitious ethical theory, disguised as a "political praxis" but pervaded by implicit moral values. Many Marxists admit this and are attempting to devise a socialist ethic. But they must confront the fact/value chasm that has yawned before every other such attempt. "History" is a value masked as a fact, immanence doing transcendent duty. Socialists have no master key to politics and must rely on honest debate about values for a direction to their deeds. History of itself confers no values, and socialists limp like everyone else.

It might seem that to demythologize Marxism is to make it less religious, less reliant on unacknowledged religious notions, but it is also true that it brings Marxism, and serious leftist thinking in general, closer to the position taken by the more honest religious thinkers. For they, too, admit the gap between the world of the senses and the "higher" or at least other world of the ideal. To speak of a leap of faith, as many of them do, is to admit to the chasm orthodox Marxists refuse to see. One need not share the whole of the Christian or Jewish ideal to allow that Christians and Jews, when they are honestly sifting their beliefs, are wrestling with questions all socialists must debate: What is the good society? Are there means to get there that do not pervert the ends? What are we called on to do? What sacrifice is right, and how do we summon the courage to make it?

My third claim, then, is that socialists have neglected the terrain that churches occupy, a terrain which, for lack of serious thinking and acting on it by the left, may be relinquished to the political right, which has done a good job of claiming it. It is our task to talk values, to talk ideals, to talk transcendence. We must recover some of our own lost traditions—such as the Romantic rebellion against early industrial capitalism—which were infused with moral and religious themes. If we have a vision, we should be open advocates of it and not be put off by dismissive remarks that it is utopian and unscientific, that it is religious and unrealistic or impractical.

This spring, in a very good debate with Norman Birnbaum on the function of religion, sponsored by the Democratic Socialists of America, Christopher Hitchens who had been attacking religious beliefs vigorously all evening, concluded by outlining his socialist faith. In dark times, in Reagan's America and Thatcher's England, with the left in retreat and the right having its way in domestic and foreign policy, it is the duty of socialists to carry the torch, to speak and act as if a socialist world were possible.

even if the evidence now seems against it. It was a moving sermon. All that remained was to sing "Onward Christian Soldiers" and go forth into the darkened streets. □

## ■ THE F.B.I. IS WATCHING

# Travelers' Warning For Nicaragua

FRANK DONNER

**W**hen Edward Haase, a journalist from Kansas City, Missouri, arrived at Miami International Airport in January, after a two-and-a-half-month stay in Nicaragua, he was taken to the customs office. There his luggage was searched, and an address book, diary, two articles he had written and other papers were seized. A customs officer then summoned an agent from the Federal Bureau of Investigation, who interrogated Haase and photocopied the materials before returning them. Three days later, an individual whose name was in Haase's address book was bothered by anonymous callers seeking information about his political views and asking whether he had made trips to Nicaragua.

The Haase case is not an isolated incident. There is abundant evidence that the Reagan Administration is using domestic surveillance techniques to intimidate dissenters against its Central America policies and to collect intelligence that would be useful in a military intervention in Nicaragua. The Administration has raised a new banner, counterintelligence, based on the weird notion that Nicaragua is flooding the country with spies. How, you might ask, does it coax the cat of Nicaraguan espionage over the creek of domestic harassment of Americans? The answer is that Americans who travel to Nicaragua might have learned something about sneaky Sandinista infiltrators and so must be questioned on their return by F.B.I. agents.

On April 17, F.B.I. Director William Webster told Don Edwards's House Subcommittee on Civil and Constitutional Rights that an estimated one hundred returnees from Nicaragua had been interviewed in the hope of digging up leads on spies. As justification for this practice, he cited Executive Order 12333, issued in December 1981, which authorizes the F.B.I., the Central Intelligence Agency and the Defense Department to "collect, produce and disseminate foreign intelligence and counterintelligence" domestically. Subsequent guidelines, issued by Attorney General William French Smith on March 7, 1983, institutionalized this tripartite domestic intelligence-gathering apparatus under the rubric "counterintelligence." The executive order and the guidelines strengthened the

Defense Investigative Service (D.I.S.), whose mission as a thinly veiled domestic operational arm of the C.I.A. seems designed to evade Congressional constraints in this area.

At the subcommittee hearing, Webster testified that he had acted pursuant to "taskings" (assignments) from the C.I.A. and the National Security Council, and in each case the Bureau proceeded on the basis of a "specific counter-intelligence reason." He added:

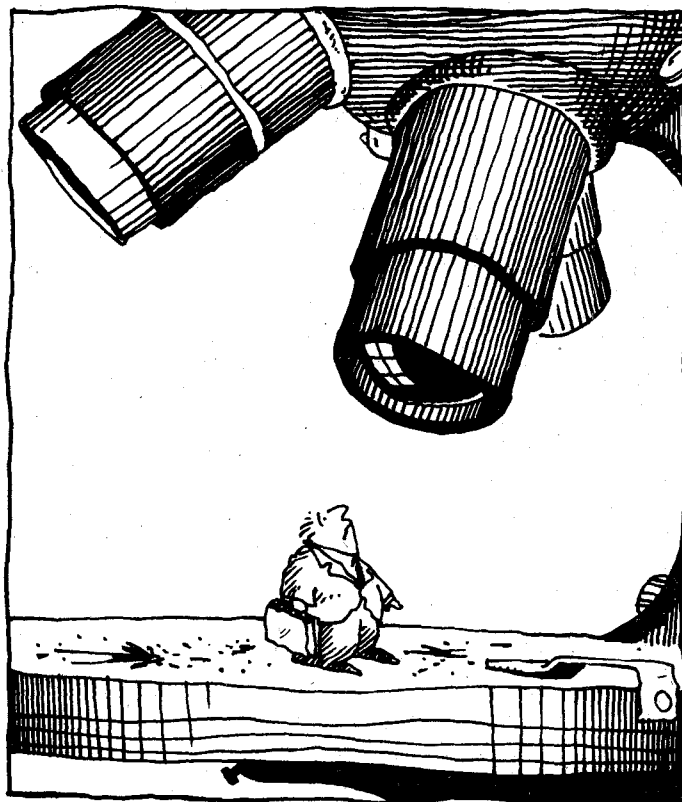
We will frequently interview persons coming back from countries known to have hostile intelligence gathering apparatus in the United States . . . to see if they have any information at all that would be useful to us in performing our counterintelligence function.

But Webster declined to confirm that a Nicaraguan spy ring was operating in this country or to elaborate on the source of his authority.

Despite Webster's explanations, it appears that a broad campaign of intimidation and snooping is in full swing, unsupported by any plausible counterintelligence rationale. Groups as well as individuals have been systematically targeted, not merely by the F.B.I. but by a batch of Federal agencies, including the Customs Service (as in the Haase case), the Internal Revenue Service, the Postal Service, the Secret Service and the D.I.S. Consider these examples:

§ Sara Murray, a staff organizer for the Michigan Inter-faith Committee on Central America, reports that the group's address lists were stolen in an office burglary; of about one hundred letters in three separate mailings, only one was delivered. Similar experiences with incoming and outgoing mail are recorded by other opponents of the Administration's Central America policies.

§ The Cambridge, Massachusetts, office of the New In-



*Frank Donner is the author of the forthcoming The Legacy of Haymarket: A History of Political Repression by Police in Urban America. He wishes to thank Michael Ratner for research assistance with this article.*

stitute on Central America was broken into and robbed three times in the past six months.

• § In May the New York City apartment of an activist with the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES) was entered and ransacked. Cash in the apartment was not stolen, but a tape recorder with a cassette containing the confession of a participant in a torture session conducted by Chilean police was.

§ The I.R.S. has subjected individuals who visited Nicaragua to tax audits.

§ The agencies charged with these abuses have vigorously denied improper conduct and have suggested either that the complaints were invented or that the agents involved had been working without authorization. In none of the cases, however, have the facts been disproved. As is frequently the case in intelligence operations, illegality breeds deception. It seems clear that in addition to engaging in questionable practices, the agencies involved have denied those practices on orders from persons higher up.

The flimsiness of the government's counterintelligence justification becomes plain when you look at the people who are targeted. Recently an F.B.I. agent called a New York City law student and left a message: "Please call me. I'd like to talk about Nicaragua. This will be a friendly chat." The student had never been to Nicaragua; he had merely attended a university discussion of U.S. policy. Landlords and employers of returnees and visitors to the Nicaraguan Embassy have also been interviewed.

Are such people sources of information about Nicaraguan espionage in this country? What is one to make of an F.B.I. interview with a man who made a telephone call to a former priest, now a registered agent of the Nicaraguan government in this country? The man claims that the agent told him: "We're investigating groups sympathetic to Nicaragua. . . . Anyone in contact with officials of criteria countries becomes a subject of investigation." When attorney Michael Ratner asked why the F.B.I. wanted to interview a client of his, an agent replied: "We try to interview everyone who takes a trip to Nicaragua. We do it for positive intelligence gathering."

When CISPES became a target, the counterintelligence

cover was replaced with a terrorism rationale. Several committee members were told they were being questioned in connection with a series of bombings of Federal installations in this country. A leaked Defense Department draft document charges that the group—which raises medical and relief funds for Salvadoran war victims—supports the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front and disseminates Soviet disinformation. Members of at least twelve CISPES chapters have been quizzed by F.B.I. agents. A woman from the Milwaukee office reported that the Bureau had told her husband that it has been intercepting her mail.

The F.B.I. has also been investigating religious organizations, which can hardly be accused of abetting terrorism. The Sojourners, an evangelical group based in Washington, energetically opposes the Administration's Central America policies and supports the sanctuary movement. At 5:45 on a Saturday morning early this year, a member of the group spotted four well-dressed men, one carrying a camera, outside its Washington office. Sojourners activist Dennis Marker says that the men would not identify themselves, explaining only that they had dropped by for a visit. On March 26, D.I.S. agents contacted the Denver office of Representative Patricia Schroeder as well as the Colorado Council of Churches, seeking the identities of participants in a prayer service held in Denver to commemorate the assassination of Salvadoran Archbishop Oscar Arnulfo Romero.

The dubious justifications offered by the agencies involved in these investigations do not obscure their purpose. They are crude attempts to stigmatize the political views of those interrogated. Webster, who is genuinely concerned about his reputation on the Hill as a moderate, instructed the agents to act gently, but most of them bungled the job. Certainly the interviews were not conventional debriefings. CISPES coordinator Beth Perry observed, "It appears that the F.B.I. was trying to impart information rather than collect it." When a man who had just returned to Santa Cruz from Nicaragua declined to meet with an agent, the agent told him that he "sounded guilty." Another CISPES member was asked to describe how the group was funded, and two others were pointedly asked to identify "terrorists" and "communists" among their associates. A fifth subject was warned by an agent that certain CISPES members were sympathetic to the Soviet Union.

If the tactical purpose of the interrogation was intimidation, not counterintelligence as Webster claimed, the strategic purpose—and here we see the C.I.A. and the D.I.S. over the shoulders of the Bureau, the Postal Service, the I.R.S. and the Customs Service—was, and remains, to collect intelligence and develop "assets" for possible grimmer struggles ahead, including military intervention in Nicaragua.

It is ironic that while pursuing these peaceful targets, the F.B.I. failed to catch up with the long-running Walker spy network, which was exposed only through a tip from John Walker's former wife. It appears that like so much of conventional intelligence gathering, the Reagan Administration's counterintelligence initiatives, so hopelessly indented to ideology, are substantially misguided. Similar ques-

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“

I think in general, at least for women, relationships and love play too great a role in their lives.”

--Cartoonist Lynda Barry, in an interview with co-host Susan Stamberg on National Public Radio's "All Things Considered."

“...the British simply lost the art of cussing a real blue streak.”

*“The conquering Normans looked down upon the crude Saxons and scorned their language. Then in the 16th century, Henry VIII broke with Rome, and, bit by bit, the British simply lost the art of cussing a real blue streak.”*

--National Public Radio's "Morning Edition" commentator John Ciardi, etymologist and poet.

“Now they oppose the humane defense [program] because it is not terrible enough.”

*“There was a time when... [scientists critical of President Reagan's Star Wars program] opposed the hydrogen bomb because it was too terrible. Now they oppose the humane defense [program] because it is not terrible enough.”*

--Physicist Edward Teller, father of the H-bomb, in an interview with co-host Noah Adams on National Public Radio's "All Things Considered."

“...the white male problem...”

*“When two or more Democrats get together these days, the conversation quickly turns to what they call the “white male problem”--the fact that Ronald Reagan and Republican candidates all over the country won the overwhelming majority of the votes of white men in the last election.”*

--Cokie Roberts, National Public Radio's congressional correspondent.

“I'm high on bein' alive, cause all of my friends are dead...I'd rather be a living legend than a dead legend.”

--Rock star Little Richard, in an interview with host Bob Edwards, on National Public Radio's "Morning Edition."

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tions about the triumph of ideology over professionalism and civility are raised by the infiltration of church meetings and religious activities and the indictment of activists in the sanctuary movement. Both operations dramatize the hypocrisy of the Administration's justifications for its initiatives against the totalitarian foes of political and religious freedom in Central America. □

## ■ EASTER ISLAND BASE

# More Than Just a Shuttle Stop

TIM FRASCA

*Santiago, Chile*

**W**ill Easter Island, the exotic volcanic dot off Chile's coast and perhaps the world's greatest open-air archeological museum because of the grim stone heads that mark its landscape, become a U.S. military base? A lot of people here are convinced that it will, despite vigorous attempts to portray the proposed agreement between Chile and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration as limited to technical cooperation on the shuttle program.

NASA has told Congress it wants to use \$7.6 million already appropriated for other purposes to lengthen Easter Island's airstrip by 1,387 feet, to about 11,000 feet, so that space vehicles can make emergency landings there. Chileans, however, don't believe that is all the new runway would be used for. With unusual outspokenness, members of the political opposition have denounced the agreement as the opening wedge of a plan to convert Easter Island into a pawn in U.S. geopolitical strategy and to draw Chile into a new military alliance.

"There are too many examples of what happens to a country when it starts renting its territory," said Gen. Guillermo Pickering, retired, before a packed house at a June 2 forum on the issue in Santiago's fanciest hotel. "Macao, Gibraltar, Hong Kong, Guantanamo—the lesson for us should be clear. The territory of the nation is not given, rented or surrendered, and faced with the threat of force, it must be defended to the death."

Such vigorous criticism of the regime of Gen. Augusto Pinochet, greeted with applause and cheers, is seldom heard in this country, which was under a state of siege from last November until June 16. Initial anxiety focused on the effects of a swarm of NASA technocrats with sophisticated equipment and American tastes on the fragile ecology and social structure of the island, 2,200 miles from the mainland. About 1,500 natives eke out an existence on its forty-six square miles of thin, rocky soil. "It would be like putting a dance floor in the National History Museum," quipped historian Oscar Pinochet (no relation to the President).

The U.S. Embassy's science attaché, Joel Cassman, has described the probability of an emergency landing by a space shuttle as "extremely remote." A high-level Chilean Air Force officer termed the chances "one in 10 million."

If an emergency is so unlikely, opponents ask, why is NASA in such a hurry to spend \$7.6 million to improve a remote airstrip? Almost as soon as Chile's military authorities released the details of the plan in mid-May, officials were saying that final agreement was a formality. That haste fueled speculation about the real reasons for the U.S. interest in Easter Island. Among the leading theories:

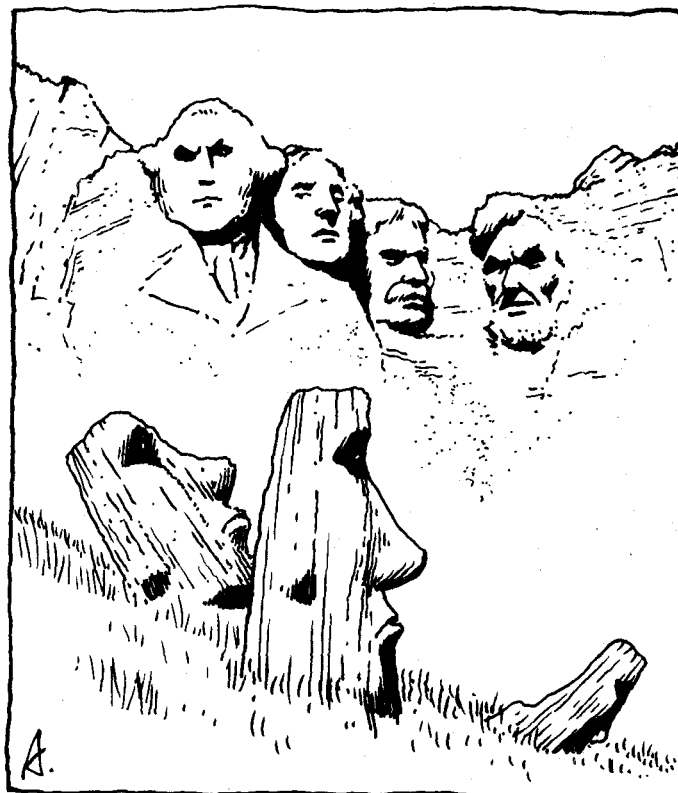
§ The location, 1,100 miles from the nearest inhabited land, makes the island an ideal listening post for nuclear submarines.

§ In combination with Britain's recently completed air base on the Falkland Islands, an Easter Island base would give the North Atlantic Treaty Organization control of the Strait of Magellan and enable it to monitor all interoceanic ship traffic in the event the Panama Canal was closed.

§ The airstrip could be used as a staging point for a U.S. rapid deployment force.

Former Christian Democratic presidential candidate Radomiro Tomic, who has been spearheading the attack on the plan, notes that these military hypotheses carry a chilling corollary: in a superpower confrontation, Easter Island could become a prime target for a Soviet nuclear strike.

Cassman dismisses all those speculations. "NASA is not in the business of tracking submarines," he says. The airport improvement would boost tourism by linking the island to commercial flights from Los Angeles, Fiji, Hawaii and Tahiti and would have a "positive environmental impact"—by which he means it would create jobs. The air-navigation equipment that would be installed is "conven-



*Tim Frasca is a freelance writer based in Chile.*

tional," he assures, with no capability for submarine detection or other military purpose.

Those explanations have not squelched the stories, which, in any case, are not new. More than a year ago, press reports in Peru and Argentina, Chile's historical enemies, alleged that Pinochet had ceded to the United States missile-base rights on the island. Although the government called the stories ridiculous, a seed of doubt was planted. Now, critics point out that the north-to-south orbit planned for space shuttles launched from Vandenburg Air Force Base in California would direct those vehicles over the Soviet Union, increasing their military potential. Indeed, NASA says it needs the Easter Island facility because of the change from the present equatorial space-flight orbits to the bipolar route.

Military watchers here also note an increase in high-level contacts between the United States and Chile in recent months, which is strange considering Congress barred military aid years ago because of Chile's poor record on human rights. In March, U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Nestor Sanchez, a hard-liner sympathetic to the Pinochet regime, met with defense officials in Santiago. He was followed in May by Lieut. Gen. Herman O. Thomson, Plans and Policy Director of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Top Chilean officers, including navy chief Adm. José Toribio Merino and air force commander Gen. Fernando Matthei, have made frequent trips to the States.

According to political scientist Augusto Varas of the Latin American Social Science Faculty in Santiago, "For other Latin American countries with active military relationships with the United States this would be normal. But for Chile, no." Varas says the Chilean regime is seeking closer military ties in order to normalize diplomatic relations with the United States. He points out that the extended Easter Island airstrip could accommodate not only troubled space shuttles but planes from U.S. aircraft carrier task forces dispatched to some hot spot in the Pacific Ocean. "This is exactly the kind of facility envisioned in the post-Nixon strategy of withdrawing U.S. troops from overseas bases and moving toward a policy of quick, temporary interventions."

Despite the unusually vocal reaction the Easter Island agreement touched off, there is little chance that Chile's generals will not approve it. "I don't understand all this nervousness that we're going to align ourselves," said Chilean Defense Minister Patricio Carvajal during recent debates. "We're already aligned with the United States against the Soviet Union. Nonaligned countries don't survive in history."

But General Pinochet and his four-man junta may have underestimated the depth of opposition to the plan, which has touched Chileans' sense of national pride (the country annexed the island in 1888). Even Chile's former ambassador to the Organization of American States, Monica Madariaga, went public on the issue, calling for "the truth, something which has been lacking for a long time in Chile."

As for the supposed economic benefit derived from the \$7.6 million project, Radomiro Tomic calls it "a tip for beggars." □

## ■ SCREENWRITERS' STRIKE

# Scenario for a Tame Union?

FINDLAY BUNTING

In March, members of the Writers Guild of America approved a new contract after a two-week strike and greater internal conflict than the union had experienced in more than twenty years. The contract signaled a major shift in the organization's politics, as a moderate minority repudiated the guild leadership's vigorous pursuit of a significant share of revenues from the burgeoning videocassette market.

The union has a tradition of militancy. Founded in the 1930s as the Screenwriters Guild to combat the byzantine labor practices of the studio bosses, the organization endured six years of harassment, blackballing, Red-baiting and competition from the studio-sponsored Screen Playwrights before winning certification in 1939. In 1954, it was reconstituted as the Writers Guild of America to include writers from radio and television. Today it is the strongest, most independent writers' group in the world. Composed of parallel organizations, the W.G.A. East and the W.G.A. West (2,800 dues payers in New York City and 6,500 in Los Angeles), its members write the bulk of the commercial film, radio and television scripts in the United States. The union's health and pension plans are solvent; its credit arbitration and grievance protections are second to none; its computers track residual payments worldwide.

This is an upscale, show business guild. A few members are millionaires; 6 percent earn more than \$50,000 a year; another 25 percent make a good but increasingly spotty income as freelance writers. A third of the members earn enough to have incorporated themselves for tax purposes. The corporations, which are signatories to the union contract, loan out the writers who own them. At least two-thirds of the membership, however, does not earn a living at writing full time. Unemployment continues to rise.

Throughout most of the union's history, its members were united in a struggle for respect and recognition, despite income differences. Unlike authors and playwrights, most screenwriters do not retain copyright privileges once they have sold their work. Their rights over their creations are usually specified in the contracts they negotiate with the studios. In Hollywood's early days, writers were treated like stagehands. Scripts were routinely butchered and rewritten, screenplay credits were awarded capriciously and stories were often stolen or re-used without permission. One by one, those humiliating conditions were overturned by the guild, and writers gained dignity in an industry where producers "made" pictures and directors were the *auteurs*.

*Findlay Bunting is a Los Angeles-based screenwriter and a member of the W.G.A.*

# BOOKS & THE ARTS.

## Watching the Detectives

TERRENCE RAFFERTY

**SUSPECTS.** By David Thomson. Alfred A. Knopf. 274 pp. \$16.95.

**FLAUBERT'S PARROT.** By Julian Barnes. Alfred A. Knopf. 190 pp. \$13.95.

David Thomson's most recent volume of film criticism, *Overexposures*, begins with an essay on *The Tonight Show* and ends with an analysis of Kubrick's *The Shining*, a film about a family man whose imagination turns murderous in the luxurious emptiness of a grand, isolated hotel—a film whose most memorable line, spoken by the demented Jack Torrance as his ax crashes through the last door between him and his quaking wife, is "Here's Johnny!" Not many critics would structure a very ambitious book (its subtitle is *The Crisis in American Filmmaking*) around a weird, offhand joke, but Thomson is the kind of overreaching, too-brilliant commentator for whom nothing is merely offhand, for whom every anomaly becomes part of a design if the lines are extended far enough, for whom there are no jokes, only clues. At his worst, he's as eerily humorless as a Freudian analyst, a demon of interpretation hovering over your sexy dreams, your hot dog at the ballpark. But at his best, Thomson is adventurous, intelligent and passionate, a hard-boiled detective driven by love or sympathy. Whether he's one of the successful ones (like Marlowe in *The Big Sleep*) or one of the tragically deluded ones (like Jake Gittes in *Chinatown* or Harry Moseby in *Night Moves*) isn't always easy to determine.

Jake Gittes is the first of the eighty-five movie characters whose "biographies" make up Thomson's novel *Suspects*. Marlowe isn't among them; Jack Torrance and Harry Moseby are. These little life stories combine plot synopsis with fanciful speculations and connections—extending the characters' lives until they intersect with other stories from other movies, or with the lives of the actors who played them, or with the

life of the narrator, who, at the end of his long monologue, is revealed as yet another character, from an unlikely movie. "There can be a lurking poetry in reference-book style: official statements with a hint of suspiciousness," says the narrator early on, when he's barely more than a hint himself. He's fascinated, too, with maps and atlases, as if the dense tangle of the interstates made an action-painting portrait of America. These motifs have popped up before in Thomson's work—he described *Overexposures* as "more a travel book than a treatise," and he is also the author of *A Biographical Dictionary of Film*—as have many of the other ideas in this book. *Suspects* has at least as many metaphors as it has characters. Thomson's metaphors, like his characters, are reincarnations, reruns of interpretive conceits from his criticism, and they have, too, the indiscriminate, equalizing quality of late-night television.

It's an odd effect, and fully intentional. *Suspects* elaborates the insomniac vision of America suggested in *Overexposures*. The book is laid out as a marathon talk show, each character's entry the same length, like the six-minute time slot for an interview, and the movies remembered here—mostly thrillers and *films noirs*—are evoked in the style of bright ideas at 2 A.M., a mixture of glazed concentration and maniacal ingenuity. In *Suspects*, as in *Overexposures*, *The Tonight Show* shades into the feverish imagination of Jack Torrance, the vigilant daddy who stays up too late and is finally deranged by reruns of past experience, by the images he receives when his own dreams refuse to come. "The screen is like a map for our dreams," says the narrator of *Suspects* at the end, when he un-masks himself as one of the most beloved family men in American movies, an amiable Nebraskan (like Johnny Carson). Thomson's notion is that our movies and our stars, all we mean by "Hollywood," are the shining madness of the flat Midwest in the middle of the night, a delirium our national unconscious has managed to push to the edge of the map.

This thesis is the big problem with Thomson's novel: first of all, because it

is a thesis. (Yes, sometimes it's the critic who's lurking in the poet's style, and the artist is revealed as just a map maker.) Second, because it rests on assumptions that are unsound and even a little unsavory. Thomson requires us to believe that there is such a thing as an American unconscious (just one); that our movies are its mirror; that all these movies are interchangeable, so that one figure stands for another and another, equivalent, democratic, like images in dreams; and finally that this democracy of images, the endless parade across the *Tonight Show* set, drives us mad, overwhelms us until we lose our image in the mirror and simply disappear, like Jack Torrance, into a photo in the grand hotel. But whose madness is this? Does it come from the poor guy in Nebraska watching old movies while his family sleeps? Or from a novelist/critic, born and educated in England, who must have known America first through its movies and its map, dreamed they were the same, and thought he could project himself into their common heart?

In the best tradition of movie insanity, Thomson the critic winds up sabotaging his other self, the novelist. Since all his characters are defined as equivalent, there's not much incentive for the reader to plow through eighty-five of them; and since the narrator is defined as a man without an identity, his voice has no resonance. *Suspects* is dense and inventive but stupefying, and when we wake up at the end, all we want to know is "Where's Johnny?"

Julian Barnes's *Flaubert's Parrot* is a criticism novel, too, and it's as full of questions as *Suspects* is full of statements. Barnes's narrator, a retired, widowed doctor named Geoffrey Braithwaite, asks some pretty big ones: "Does life improve?" "What knowledge is useful, what knowledge is true?" and (his constant refrain) "How do we seize the past?" He also asks some little ones, scholar's queries: Did Flaubert have an English mistress? What happened to the stuffed parrot the writer used as a model for the famous bird in "A Simple Heart"? Braithwaite is in the tradition of the worldly, cynical physicians we find in Chekhov or Graham Greene, and he knows his Flaubert cold, and yet, for all his knowledge, he can't come up with the answers he needs most. But he isn't pathetic or irritating, because Barnes

Terrence Rafferty is a writer who lives in New York City.

knows enough to satisfy our curiosity as novel readers, which is all that matters: we know where Geoffrey Braithwaite is in this narrative, we feel the urgency of his interrogations, and so the mysteries that frustrate him are useful knowledge for us. We understand that the gaps in Braithwaite's knowledge aren't meant to be filled, that the dots on the map won't be connected, that his questions don't need answers because they're more than questions—they're the events of a first-person narrative, the graph of a singular human voice.

And Braithwaite's is a remarkably clear, straightforward voice. The convention of the criticism novel—including good ones, like *Pale Fire*—is that the narrator's critical activity is evasive, a way of delaying telling a story he doesn't want to tell (but invariably spills in the last few pages, after scattering small "inadvertent" revelations throughout the book). *Flaubert's Parrot* plays the what's-the-real-story? game, too, but plays it right out in the open. "Three stories contend within me," says Braithwaite. "One about Flaubert, one about Ellen [the narrator's dead wife], one about myself. My own is the simplest of the three—it hardly amounts to more than a convincing proof of my existence—and yet I find it the hardest to begin. My wife's is more complicated and more urgent, yet I resist that too. . . . Ellen's is a true story; perhaps it is even the reason why I am telling you Flaubert's story instead." There's no irony lurking in that passage, no clever author whispering behind his narrator's back that we, and we alone, know what's what. This frank, confessional tone isn't typical of *Flaubert's Parrot*, but the author's attitude is: the abundant jokes and ironies of Braithwaite's monologue are all the character's own. Barnes has made him smart and funny and perfectly self-aware (he even acknowledges our suspicion that he murdered his wife), so we're not tempted to flatter our intelligence by trying to anticipate him—we know he'll tell his story when he's ready to.

The real story—no surprise—is about Braithwaite's marriage and the death of his wife, and its relationship to the Flaubert story which dominates the monologue seems perfectly judged. Too much correspondence between the narrator's Flaubert research and his summing up of his own life, and the novel would be just another overdetermined literary stunt, a donnish

tour de force (like *Suspects*); too little, and the conceit is pointless—or pointedly arbitrary, which might be worse. The evidence of Braithwaite's scholarship here includes two chronologies, an essay on the color of Emma Bovary's eyes, a "Flaubert Bestiary," a set of possible and impossible exam questions, the invented apologia of the writer's mistress, Louise Colet, and a "Dictionary of Accepted Ideas" about Flaubert. Instead of forcing the Flaubert material to match up one-to-one with the story of Geoffrey and Ellen, Barnes allows Flaubert to flower slowly as a metaphor in the course of the narrator's spiel, to gather resonance, *justness*, not from the details picked up by Braithwaite's wildly heterogeneous researches but from the patient accumulation of jokes, asides, confessions and questions that define a voice—and the tone of Geoffrey Braithwaite's voice is all we need to tell us what Flaubert means in this novel. The author of *Madame Bovary* is, for Braithwaite, an ideal of objectivity, the detached, eye-level gaze on death and adultery, on the fixed shadows of the past and the bright mess of the present. Braithwaite himself is like an amateur photographer taking pictures of his family, his love for his subjects inspiring a benign mania for precision, taking a step back, a couple forward, making a little shift to one side—looking for the right spot, the perfect distance and angle to get everything in and everything in focus. For Barnes's narrator, Flaubert means a method of finding that spot, the secret of measuring the distance exactly: he's not (as Sartre had it) "the family idiot," but the family photographer.

Braithwaite's verbal footwork is a way of maneuvering for a true shot of his life with Ellen, a picture that's both honest and bearable: he takes too many steps, but he's more attractive than his master, who never showed his moves (and whose pursuit of exactness was surely inspired by a more abstract, less individual passion). *Flaubert's Parrot* is a minor classic, and one of the best criticism novels ever, because its critic/narrator has some dignity, because his choice of subject makes emotional sense and because the book has a lively, questioning spirit. It's truer to both good criticism and good fiction than the elaborate interpretive grid of *Suspects* is, and Barnes, in his offhand way, performs a couple of literary mar-

riages straight out of critics' dreams: he's written a modernist text with a nineteenth-century heart, a French novel with English lucidity and tact. □

## ART.

ARTHUR C. DANTO

Marc Chagall

**T**he ability to identify a Chagall testifies as little to one's powers of connoisseurship as the ability to pick out a robin demonstrates ornithological competence. Even the marginally privileged child will recognize "a chagall" in the museum with as scant a cognitive effort as is required to single out a zebra at the zoo. Such instantaneous identification explains Chagall's success as an artist as well as his failure as a master, for once we know a work to be a Chagall, we seldom look further. There can be few readers of *The Nation* who have not seen the landmark murals of Lincoln Center. But try to call them to memory and you will almost certainly fail. Even so, you will be able to guess their contents without being importantly wrong: levitating lovers, bouquets of botanically indeterminate flowers, green musicians in motley, domestic animals with expressions benign enough to serve at adorations, abruptly dilated fowl, inverted villages—all deployed in arbitrary spaces and defined through a certain gorgeousness of color. How could you miss and the work still be a Chagall? How can it greatly matter that there is a lyre rather than a fiddle?

There was a time, not long past, when the Chagall reproduction was the decorative emblem of choice in the standard literate apartment, collaborating with the sling chair, the Parsons table, the Danish lamp, the Finnish rug—and, of course, last week's *New Yorker*—to express the common taste of those loosely in touch with what we now call modernism. At the same time, the Chagall mural or the Chagall window served the corresponding public function of marking a particular building as being at the acme of contemporary good taste. Easily identified, they carried the semiotic status of trademark, and the irresistible combination of cultural authority and artistic undemandingness gave Chagall a competitive edge unmatched even by Henry Moore. And he seemed to pro-

duce Chagalls with the effortless abundance promised by one of his swollen chickens. In consequence, there exists a glut of Chagall images in domestic interiors, public spaces and collections of every degree of importance. The first critical question, accordingly, is whether this thick layer of familiarity interposes itself, like an esthetic cataract, between the work and ourselves—or whether the work is simply congruent with the multiplicity of its appearances so that seeing is all we need by way of looking in his case.

It cannot have been the primary motivation of those who organized the impressively comprehensive exhibition of Chagall's work at the Philadelphia Museum of Art (through July 21) to counteract this pictorial entropy, because, in part, they did not perceive it as a problem. Visitors, the catalogue assures its readers, "will be surprised and even amazed at the strength of imagery which explodes from canvas, glass, or print." In the curators' view, Chagall was recognized after 1948 as "the greatest living artist." The exhibition is an homage—or, because of his recent death, a memorial—to "the greatest religious artist of our times." There is no suspicion that he was, instead, the overproductive, repetitive and shallow manufacturer of Chagalls-to-order that some have judged him. There can be few artists—Dali is the other example who comes readily to mind—on whom such extremely opposed positions have been taken. At the very least, the structure of a major chronological exhibition sufficiently constrains attention to make comprehensible some of the pleasure that visitors felt forty-odd years ago, when they encountered the great postwar exhibition of his work at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City and the Art Institute of Chicago.

At least this is true of the work done in the epic period of his life, when he was a student and later an artistic commissar in his native Vitebsk, making sojourns in St. Petersburg and Paris, in Berlin and in Paris once more, then, finally, with the coming of World War II, in New York. It is plain that after he returned to France, in 1948, following the death of his marvelous wife, Bella, his output, with minor departures, settled at the level of the high-style perfume advertisement. It is true that this level defines the artistic production of the School of Paris generally during

those years; and while one finds one's progress through the Philadelphia show accelerating on encountering the cloying sameness of the work from the last four decades of his life, one cannot help but wonder if his decline was due to the decline of the school as a school, or if there were internal reasons for the falling off of his creative powers. Picasso, Matisse and perhaps even Braque went from strength to strength in those years. Why did Chagall go the way of Marcel Vertès, Eugene Berman, Christian Berard or, at best, Raoul Dufy? I think the answer must be instructive, and I offer the following speculation.

My sense is that Chagall was a vital artist just so long as he was forced to engage in the art wars of his time, when he resisted demands that he surrender a certain originary vision and paint in ways in which he did not deeply believe. Chagall's strategy, almost like the Russian response to military invasions, was to allow the enemy to make profound penetrations onto native ground and then to harass its disarrayed retreat. In each case, he accommodated alien imperatives to the point where it seemed that he had been subdued, and then, somehow, he managed to repel the opposing vision, even though his work was transformed by the encounter. There

were three main waves of stylistic incursion. First was the unashamed decorativeness of flat forms, which he received from Gauguin, whose work he knew primarily through reproductions available in Russia. The second raid, very nearly victorious, came from Cubism. In "Adam and Eve" of 1912, nearly all that remains of Chagall, apart from the signature, is a yellow goat with a jaunty bird perched on its horns, and a tiny green goat gazing over his own shoulder and out of the frame, as if unwilling to contemplate the shingled forms that would, had Chagall continued to employ them, have delivered him to art history as one of the lesser Lesser Cubists. The last wave came from the austere manifestoes of Suprematism: Chagall had to fight with Malevitch for the artistic conscience of Vitebsk after the Revolution. Four small pieces in Philadelphia show Chagall literally bending to save himself from Suprematist conformity. For a style warrior, France was exactly the wrong place to be after 1948, though by then Chagall was perhaps too exalted a personage to have found the powerful aggressions of New York painting even scrutable. In any case, he mellowed out to the familiar softness in the precincts of Provence. Unlike Picasso, he evi-

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dently did not generate his own internal contestations.

This *Sturm und Drang* narrative doubtless sounds portentous and excessively heroized, so I must add a defensive word. We have been living through a curious period of art, marked at best by an ideology of pluralism, where everything is tolerated because there is no clear direction in which the art world wants to go. You, an abstractionist, go your way; she, a minimalist, goes hers; I, an expressionist, go mine; and if someone wants to be a minimalist expressionist color-field abstract figurationist painter of *fêtes galantes*, well, that's all right too.

But this amiable laissez-faire contrasts with the intense dogmatism that animated twentieth-century art until the present slack age. There was a time on Tenth Street when abstraction was insisted on with an urgency sufficiently religious that an artist who opted for figuration did so with the stubborn conscience of a heretic. I knew an artist in the 1950s, when *The Club* served as the local synod of stylistic encyclicals, who insisted on doing the figure though it meant risking his soul. Then, in the early 1960s, when Pop prevailed and Abstract Expressionism sat by in astonished defeat, it occurred to him that it was O.K. to do whatever he wished. But with this came the recognition that the tensions that had given meaning to his art had dissolved that meaning with their own dissolution. He resigned from the art world and found other work in life.

Twentieth-century art has never, until recently, been motivated by formal or merely esthetic considerations. It has been religious and revolutionary and has been viewed by its makers as a means to spiritual transformation and moral redemption. To paint one way, to paint against another way, gave artists the feelings that customarily accompany a conversion rather than a decision. Chagall becomes interesting when one senses within his canvases the resistance to great and contrary artistic forces, so that even his concessions have the form of surrenders rather than experiments. If you are an orthodox Hindu, you do not choose to eat beef with the cool curiosity of the adventurous eater in SoHo, who selects guppies braised in watermelon cognac from the imaginative menu of a daring chef. But this, if true, leaves the question, What identity was Chagall seeking to preserve

against the domination of other schools? What remains when we subtract the struggle? Perhaps he would have remained the brash, provincial artist the earlier work promised, which looks, folksy imagery notwithstanding, as though painted in gravy on pumpernickel panels. Perhaps the counterfactual question is wrong. As he acquired an identity through the history of his resistances, so he would have come to little had he not been tried, his being a battlefield promotion to artistic consideration. In a sense, what he insisted on was the autonomy of all painting in the face of movements that meant to swamp it.

The famous "I and the Village" of 1911 is a case in point. A peasant in a peaked cap faces a smiling cow, their eyes locked in a gaze Chagall has painted as a loopy line from pupil to pupil. The churl has a green profile; the cow's head is full of sky, while her thoughts are externalized as the fantasy of being milked. The two brows form the upper half of an hourglass shape in which a rustic pair is depicted, the man marching somewhere with a scythe, the woman floating upside down. The upside-down woman is the unmistakable Chagall touch. I focus on her as the key to the work and, in a sense, to the corpus. For one thing, it is not literally an image of an upside-down woman. If you believed it were, you would want an explanation for why her skirt had not fallen around her neck. In fact, it hugs her ankles, and though it might be argued that in her society modesty defies gravity, the artistic moral is that images have a life of their own. The image is upside down, but it does not follow that the woman is upside down. The painting belongs in the genre of Magritte's depiction of a pipe, under which is written—truthfully, since it is only a picture—that it is not a pipe. Chagall's work is full of implicit inscriptions like that—"These houses are not upside down," or "This peasant does not have a green nose," or "This is not a village." Paintings are not in bondage to external reality; their emancipation is celebrated with a giddy infectious joy. I surmise that what Chagall got from the Cubists was a licence to arrange forms to suit the artist's impulses rather than to depict an unperceived geometry in the world. Meanwhile, he had to resist abstraction, because it does not allow the defiance of pictorial liberty.

In a momentous passage from *The*

*Interpretation of Dreams*, Freud abandons the hypothesis that dreams stand to ordinary mental processes as one language stands to another and argues instead that a dream is like a rebus puzzle, whose solution is an unconscious desire. He writes:

Suppose I have a picture puzzle, a rebus before me. It depicts a house with a boat on its roof, a single letter of the alphabet, the figure of a running man whose head had been conjured away. . . . Now I might be misled into declaring the picture as a whole and its component parts are nonsensical. A boat has no place on a roof, a headless man cannot run. Moreover, the man is bigger than the house; and if the whole picture is meant to represent a landscape, letters are out of place. . . . But obviously we can form a proper judgment of the rebus if we put aside such judgments as these.

Were I to ask someone whose painting the passage describes, the answer would almost certainly be Chagall's, with the possible suggestion that it might be one of the murals at Lincoln Center. If we put aside the criticisms, as Freud requires in the case of dreams, we lose the meaning—for we can put the image of a boat on a picture of a roof in an affirmation of pictorial autonomy. We can put a space between a woman and her head, as in "To Russia, Donkeys, and Others" of 1912 (not shown here), which in life would be fatal but in art is merely expressive. Expressive of what, of course, requires a genre of scholarship to answer, though certain juxtapositions are obvious and inspired, as in the affecting portrait of himself placing a kiss on his fiancée's cheek, the tenderness of which is enhanced by the lovers' implied weightlessness. It belongs to the universal lexicon of images that Freud sought, and it vindicates James Johnson Sweeney's assessment of Chagall's contribution to modern art as "the awakening of the poetry of representations."

The death of creativity is as mysterious as creativity itself. If my explanation is wrong, I can think of no other. It cannot simply be that eventually, in combining images unanchored to reality, a deadening repetition supervenes, for surely there could be an artist who does with paint what Donald Barthelme does with words, remaining all the while driven by an inner growth. Nor is repetition itself a sign of artistic death, for there are very great painters who, like

Morandi and Motherwell, return again and again to the same themes, growing deeper with each fresh address. Nor could it have been the death of Bella, for Chagall went on to do the scenery for "The Firebird," which I count as his masterpiece. It is as though, having struggled to retain freedom, he had nothing to do when freedom was unchallenged. When the struggles stopped, the meaning went, though the painting went on and on. There was then only the war with the market, which he seemed only too glad to lose. □

## FILMS:

### GEORGE DE STEFANO

#### Before Stonewall

**H**ow have homosexual men and women, condemned by church, state and medical science, managed to create community? Where did the gay and lesbian political movement come from? The new documentary *Before Stonewall* finds the answers in the social, cultural and political changes that transformed American life in the fifty years before the 1969 Stonewall rebellion, that outburst of rage and resistance in New York City which ushered in the modern movement for gay and lesbian liberation.

Inspired by John D'Emilio's important book, *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities*, *Before Stonewall* hews to the historical materialism and time frame of its model, sometimes expanding and in a few cases attenuating the source material. (D'Emilio served as one of the film's three main historical consultants.) The filmmakers—executive producer John Scagliotti, director Greta Schiller and co-director Robert Rosenberg—have constructed their account of a community's evolution from archival footage, Hollywood film clips, home movies and interviews with the men and women who lived gay life in the decades before Stonewall. Snatches of campy old pop tunes and witty gay revampings of familiar folk songs add atmosphere to the evocations of homosexual history. Narrator Rita Mae Brown is a helpful but unobtrusive guide. Enlightening and entertaining,

*George De Stefano is a freelance writer living in New York City.*

full of iconoclastic humor and a feisty, committed spirit, *Before Stonewall* embodies that elusive something known as gay sensibility.

The chronicle begins with the industrialization and urbanization of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In cities, men and women of homosexual inclination could escape stifling traditional patterns of life and meet one another. Denizens of the era's gay underground clustered in bohemian Greenwich Village and renaissance-era Harlem. Those days are recalled by writer Richard Bruce Nugent, a friend of Zora Neale Hurston and a contributor to Langston Hughes's journal, *Fire!*, and by former dancer Mabel Hampton. Hampton, a tiny octogenarian, tells of meeting Bessie Smith, Alberta Hunter and Ethel Waters, celebrated entertainers who she says were in "the life."

The homosexual subculture of the 1920s and 1930s produced such literati as Gertrude Stein, Natalie Barney, Tennessee Williams, Margaret Anderson and Romaine Brooks. The censorship trials of the best-selling novel *The Well of Loneliness* and the Broadway play *The Captive* drew public attention to homosexuality. But in 1934, the motion picture code prohibited any depiction of same-sex eroticism in the movies. Although gay life was circumscribed by society's hostility, the end of Prohibition that same year permitted a gay bar subculture to take shape.

World War II created the conditions that would allow a demimonde to become a community. Millions of Americans were uprooted from their familiar surroundings and placed in sex-segregated environments which fostered intense emotional and sexual bonds. In the military, previously isolated homosexual men and women met others of their kind for the first time. "My Buddy" and "Gal From Kalamazoo" became their theme songs.

The recollections of gay and lesbian veterans provide some of *Before Stonewall*'s most fascinating moments. A Navy man recalls friends and lovers killed in combat. Chuck Rowland, who would become a pioneer gay activist in the 1950s, says the Army induction center at Fort Snelling was a "seduction center" run by "all of the people I had known in the gay bars of Minneapolis." Johnnie Phelps relates a startling anecdote about a confrontation she and several other lesbian WACs had with their commanding officer. It seems that

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General Eisenhower had planned to purge the battalion of lesbians until Sergeant Phelps and some other sisters in uniform explained that such a move would dangerously deplete the ranks of servicewomen.

After the war many gays and lesbians maintained their friendships, settling down in large cities where anonymity helped them to form enclaves. The extraordinary circumstances of the war years had made it easier for them to associate, but there had been no increase in social tolerance of homosexuality. The 1950s were the Dark Ages of gay American history. A mania for conformity and a fear of difference swept the land, assuming its political form in McCarthyism. The Red-baiting Senator from Wisconsin and his cohorts regarded political subversives and sexual perverts as twin threats to the American way. The McCarthyite purges of government and military personnel, however, affected more homosexuals than alleged Communists. Standing in front of Reagan's White House, Frank Kameny describes how he lost his job with the Federal government. In another sequence, Joe McCarthy banters with a friendly witness about "pixies" and "fairies," his sneering minion Roy Cohn hovering at his side.

But the 1950s were not unrelievedly grim. There were also significant strides toward liberation. The first gay political organizations came into being during those years. Three veteran Communist Party members—Harry Hay, Bob Hull and Chuck Rowland—founded the male-oriented Mattachine Society. Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon formed the Daughters of Bilitis for lesbians. (Neither woman, however, appears in the film.) The gay press was born with such publications as *ONE*, *Mattachine Review* and *The Ladder*. The Kinsey reports on male and female sexuality alarmed homophobes by documenting the high incidence of homosexual behavior in America. They also intensified public discourse on homosexuality and helped undermine the notion that gays and lesbians constitute some exotic subspecies of humanity. Repressive

cultural norms and antisexual morality were further challenged by the Beat movement. Gay self-expression won an important victory in 1956, when Allen Ginsberg's homoerotic *Howl* survived a censorship trial.

During the 1950s and early 1960s, Mattachine and Bilitis never claimed as members more than a tiny fraction of America's gay and lesbian population. It was simply too risky for most to engage in gay activism. In many cities cops routinely raided bars and private homes; postal inspectors monitored mail (a physique magazine or a copy of *ONE* could be seized and their intended recipients prosecuted); and blackmail of gays was a thriving racket. Numerous gays and lesbians did, however, commit themselves to other struggles.

"Many of us who went South with Dr. King in the sixties were gay," says a white minister. "A lot of gay people who could not come out for their own liberation could invest their energies in the liberation of blacks." The civil rights movement was, in fact, the prototype for the gay activism that developed in the 1960s. Footage of gays and lesbians picketing the State Department in 1965 indicates that the homosexual movement, which had been fearful of going public, was taking lessons from civil rights militants.

But the black influence went deeper than the choice of political tactics. Two black lesbians, poet Audre Lorde and educator Maua Adele Ajanaku, say that the rejection of racist stereotypes by blacks inspired gay people to question the terms of their oppression and the degree to which they had internalized heterosexual standards. The diversity of the men and women who appear in *Before Stonewall* belies the stereotypes of swish queens and mannish dykes, but for many years a butch/fem dichotomy structured gay culture. Society's gender codes were so ironclad, especially in the 1950s, that homosexual men and women were under pressure to adopt rigidly schematized roles. The process of liberation that took off in the 1960s under the inspiration of the black movement and the counterculture greatly expanded the possibilities for self-definition.

On a June night at the end of the decade, the young, mainly effeminate patrons of a Greenwich Village bar known as the Stonewall Inn violently resisted a police raid. This unheard-of defiance swelled into two nights of rioting on Christopher Street, which in-

volved more than 2,000 gays and lesbians and 400 police. Moving from the early days to that signal event, *Before Stonewall* covers a lot of ground in its eighty-seven minutes. Besides being remarkably comprehensive, the film is also "politically correct" in a nontendentious way. Men and women get equal time, and racial issues are dealt with.

There are some lapses, however. Mattachine founders Hay and Rowland brought years of Communist Party experience and a Marxist approach to their gay organizing in the 1950s, but the film fails to explore their leftism. It also overlooks the tensions that existed between pioneer gay and lesbian activists, which stemmed from different interests and political perspectives and from the sexism of some of the men. And why aren't the clips from Hollywood movies identified, especially the one with Ronald Reagan and the drag queens?

Although the liberation project remains unfinished, the post-Stonewall accomplishments of gays and lesbians have been amazing: Political action groups in virtually every major city, and in many lesser ones too. Campus organizations in the Deep South. An array of social, cultural and professional associations. Elected officials who are openly gay or lesbian. An explosion in community publishing, as well as films like the Oscar-winning *The Times of Harvey Milk*, and *Before Stonewall*. But will it last? Patrick Buchanan, in his earlier incarnation as a heavy-breathing pundit, predicted that AIDS will cause the "scattering" of the nation's gay communities, a catastrophe devoutly wished for by the White House communications director and others of his ilk.

The terrible epidemic and the resultant rise in overt homophobia are serious setbacks. (Some lesbians complain that with so much of the movement's energies focused on AIDS, their concerns have taken a back seat—a new form of lesbian invisibility.) But it's not Pollyanna-ish to say that the current calamities will neither put an end to what has been achieved nor dictate an entirely gloomy future. *Before Stonewall* makes a convincing case that the gay and lesbian community will survive, even flourish, because it is deeply embedded in the fabric of American life, born of profound social change and of a heroic, tenacious freedom struggle. □

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# DANCE.

## MINDY ALOFF

### A Midsummer Night's Dream Romeo and Juliet

**T**he only touch of Shakespeare on Broadway this spring came courtesy of dancers—in George Balanchine's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for the New York City Ballet at the State Theater and in Kenneth MacMillan's *Romeo and Juliet*, given its New York company premiere by American Ballet Theatre at the Metropolitan Opera House. For those who saw them, it was something of a trip in a time machine. Both ballets are products of the 1960s. I first saw *Midsummer* shortly after its 1962 premiere, and *Romeo* on a Royal Ballet tour of the States in the mid-1960s, when the work was new. If you had asked my teen-age self which one would look better twenty years later, *Romeo* would have won handsily. It possessed the love theme of the decade, also represented in *West Side Story* (the movie), in Franco Zeffirelli's production of Shakespeare's play at the London Old Vic, in his film (whose "Theme From Romeo and Juliet" was ubiquitously pounded out for adagio combinations in ballet classes) and in 101 television shows about the star-crossed kids of hawks and doves.

*Romeo* made one proud to be defiantly young. In keeping with the spirit of the times, it brought the lovers into close-up and distanced us even further from the already scornful view of the warring families that Prokofiev and his collaborators had built into their popular 1935 score. To accomplish this, MacMillan went one step beyond the Bolshoi and abandoned Shakespeare's last scene, in which the adults of Verona admit complicity in the death of the lovers and dissolve their grievances. In his version, the children are untimely ripped not only from each other but from the context of their lives. There were precedents for this shift of focus in the Zeffirelli production and in the *Romeo and Juliet* ballet of the late John Cranko, first staged for La Scala in 1958 and popularized in America by the Stuttgart Ballet, which acquired it in 1962. This March, the Joffrey Ballet gave a spirited rendition of the Cranko version during the company's twenty-ninth season at the State Theater, and one could detect in it many of the

visceral effects that must have seized MacMillan. Although Cranko's choreography is impoverished—his vocabulary of steps permits a range of expression about equal to that of a first-year student of French—his gift for creating immediately legible stage pictures gives each scene a posterish charge. The suicide of his Juliet, which ends the ballet, is practically vampirish. A spotlight contracts about the girl's bloodless body, which eerily illuminates the tomb. This Juliet is at last cut off even from Romeo as the lights go out on her piteous figure, an icon of death.

The case with MacMillan is more complicated. His classic range and dic-

tion surpass Cranko's, and his roller-coaster partnering work is audacious and entirely unique. Owing, perhaps, to his more subtle turn of mind, he does not share Cranko's facility for large, clear pictures. Against Nicholas Georgiadis's grandiose sets, MacMillan's characters must fight to maintain their individuality; their steps alone do not do it for them. After the death scene, the curtain rings down on a tableau locking Romeo, Juliet and Paris in an attractive abstract. In this ballet, one responds to the dancers who fight best against ease. From the several casts I saw, I'd cite the Juliets of Leslie Browne and Natalia Makarova, the

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Tybalt of Victor Barbee, the Mercutio of Gil Boggs, the Lady Capulet of Georgina Parkinson. They made their characterizations "read" by sharpening the patterns of technical details, picking out quirky strands of their roles to hold up for our steady inspection. Sometimes they managed this even when a detail was not particularly flattering to them. In one of the pas de deux, Juliet seems to pitch herself up from Romeo on the floor to a full arabesque on point in one count. The move looks dangerous and wild, and you can see immediately how well it would show off a ballerina with a highly arched foot, like Lynn Seymour, the Royal Ballet dancer on whom it was created. Browne respected the choreography at the expense of looking fully at ease in it, and her scrappiness became an important part of her character.

In 1985, one can't help scrutinizing the mechanics of passion in a *Romeo and Juliet*; the idea of being swept away by the chemistry of star partnerships seems antique. In fact, it's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, where passion submits to authority and personality to technical wit, that looks modern. The Mendelssohn score, an anthology of well-known and obscure pieces which took Balanchine more than twenty years to shape, sounds so fresh that it makes the highly wrought Prokofiev motifs seem middle-aged and weary. Balanchine at 58 heard the unselfconscious directness of youth more clearly than MacMillan, who developed his *Romeo* in his mid-30s. The plays, of course, are both youthful works. Scholars date them circa 1595, when Shakespeare was 31. (*Midsummer*, which contains a parody of Juliet's death scene in the rustics' production of *Pyramus and Thisbe*, was probably written second.) Both contain rhapsodic poetry about love, and both project ambivalence about hierarchies, from the family to the state. MacMillan treats the poetry as an occasion for grand gestures and the ambivalence as a cue for revolution. Balanchine chose to treat the poetry without nostalgia and the order without protest.

During the 1960s, Balanchine was bucking the tide with such a reading, and the subtle structure that bore it out was invisible to many. All but the most sophisticated dancegoers tended to overlook the emotional resonance of the court dancing in the second, storyless act. Today, one can't imagine a City Ballet audience missing the dance im-

ages that connect the exposition of the plot and the lyric divertissement—the many ways that steps transform character and are transformed by it. One could write an essay about the elaboration of Titania's arabesques, with their little jumps or whipping changes of direction, into the fouetté and sauté combinations for the figures of Theseus' court; the "poetry" of the ballet is rooted in such precise, dancery concerns.

Although Balanchine has been quoted as saying that "it is really impossible to dance Shakespeare," offering Mendelssohn's music as his subject instead, his ballet follows Shakespeare's text more closely than does MacMillan's *Romeo*. The *Midsummer* ballet is always knitting up offhand remarks into spectacular lyric events. In Shakespeare, one finds Oberon telling Titania that together, "new in amity," they will "dance in Duke Theseus' house triumphantly," and Bottom, disenchanted, vows to "get Peter Quince to write a ballad of this dream. . . and I will sing it in the latter end of a play, before the Duke." In Balanchine, we see the amity and the dream embodied in a single pas de deux performed by court entertainers; a line of linked bourées for the couple even builds Pyramus and Thisbe's wall.

Owing to eccentric casting this season, *Midsummer* was very much a women's show. Of the Titanias I saw, Maria Calegari took more wanton risks of strength and balance, but Darci Kistler, who continues her slow recovery from a debilitating foot injury, was the more unpredictable in her timing and attack, and the more magical. In the final pas de deux, Merrill Ashley spoke the strictest academic language, but Heather Watts sustained the finest legato; Patricia McBride, with her legs beating featherweight cabrioles, demonstrated the most refined virtuosity.

Some observers continue to despair over the David Hays sets and Karinska costumes, but while I respect their dissent, I can't share it. Of course, the designs are more diffuse in their effect than, say, those for the other great *Midsummer* of the period, Peter Brook's staging for the Royal Shakespeare Company, with its dazzling whites, scarlet feathers, jewel-colored velvets and jungle-gym set. Brook's production, lusty and rich, was the dream of a clown with taste. Balanchine's, ironic and complex, pours into the eye from a higher source. □

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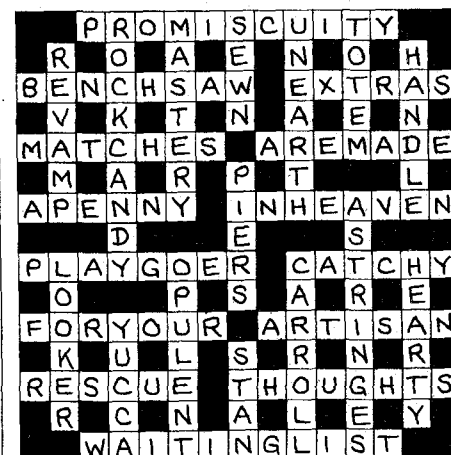


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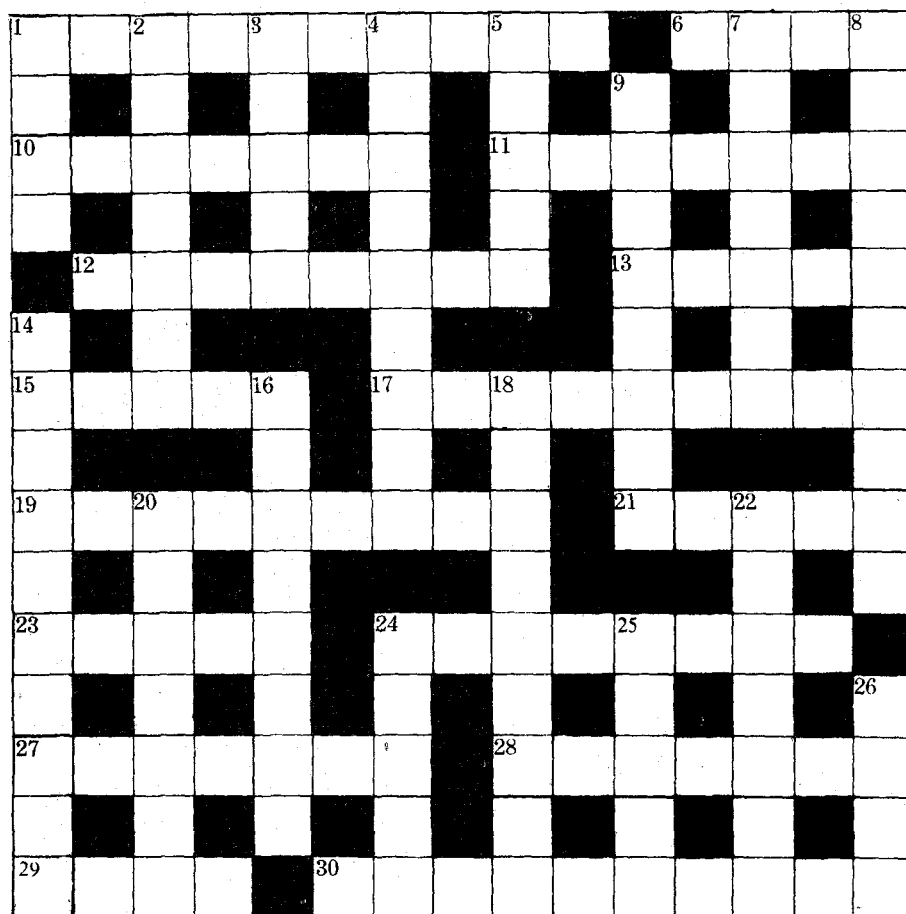
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FRANK W. LEWIS



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- 1 and 10 Periodically, a Fifth Avenue blessed event, covered in what sounds like silence. (3,5,2,1,6)  
 6 Fish? (One in the furnace starts out with it.) (4)  
 10 See 1 across  
 11 Shakespeare implied we might look for them in stones, finding some in lesser monsters. (7)  
 12 They may be molded with both vegetables and desserts. (8)  
 13 Leave nothing here—find it in South America. (5)  
 15 Bent tines? Get the picture, little one? (5)  
 17 This makes us go white, but has more poundage. (9)  
 19 The sort which describe aren't the sort which point, as one arrives around the point at which we're supposed to head them off. (8)  
 21 and 7 down Make sport of drums, with cries of derision. (4-8)  
 23 Came first after appearing to go wrong, but looked familiarly like this. (5)  
 24 Change a tire before a copper is inclined not to say anything! (8)  
 27 Why the field goal didn't count at the start of the game? (4-3)  
 28 Club—for high-ranking officers, that is! (7)  
 29 A jerk? Not if one of us! (4)  
 30 A sort of gripe? False! Just frivolous talk! (10)
- 2 Different names, or charms. (7)  
 3 He was bound to turn around—making nine, with one on. (5)  
 4 Holding such to be counties with a difference? (9)  
 5 Nothing just as it stands could be so welcome to the thirsty. (5)  
 7 See 21 across  
 8 Dusts—part of what's ordered is posse's share. (10)  
 9 Hang around quite often? (8)  
 14 Flying saucer pilot, possibly heard on the radio? (4,6)  
 16 How one enters a two-wheel carriage, or gets up into the attic? (4,4)  
 18 Get set to run better if you do this first? (You might expect culture with them!) (4,5)  
 20 What is able to claim it's a perfect food, coming out of such? (4,3)  
 22 Troubled men in a foreign land find things are beyond recall with it. (7)  
 24 Pilfer? All but softheaded, and confused! (5)  
 25 Refuse to ridicule someone. (5)  
 26 Not quite all there—certainly not there! (4)

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## DOWN

- 1 Late-appearing duck? (4)

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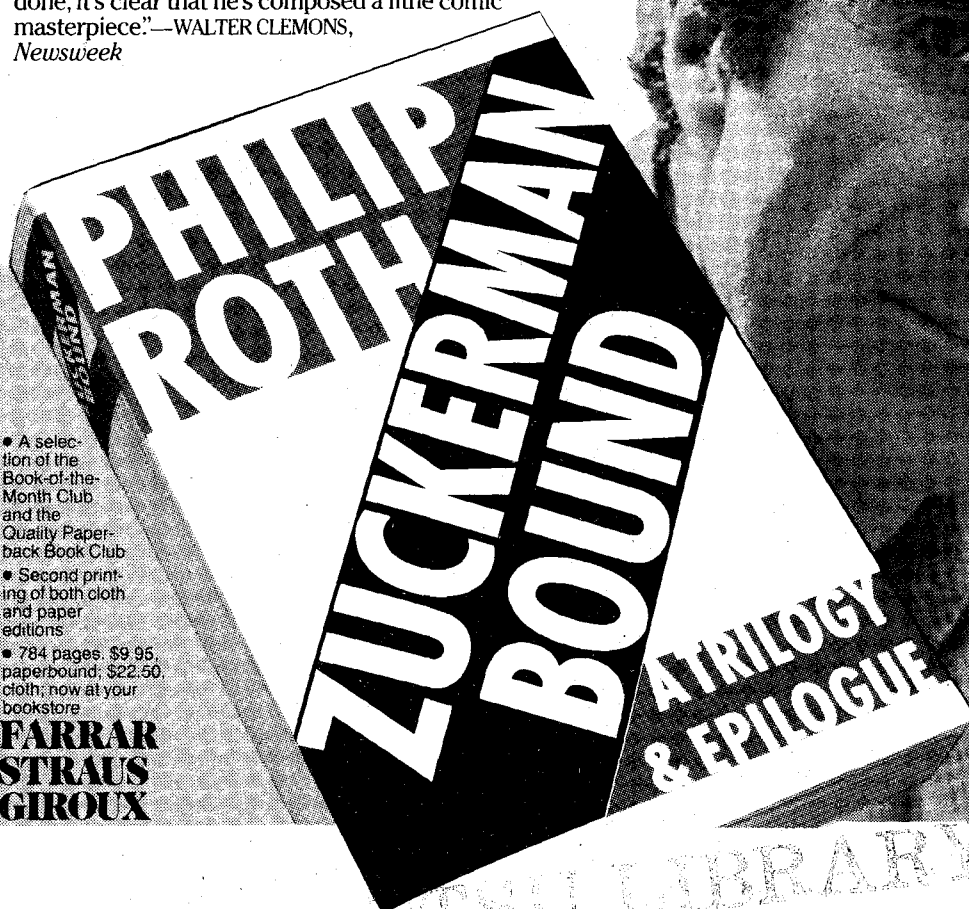
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